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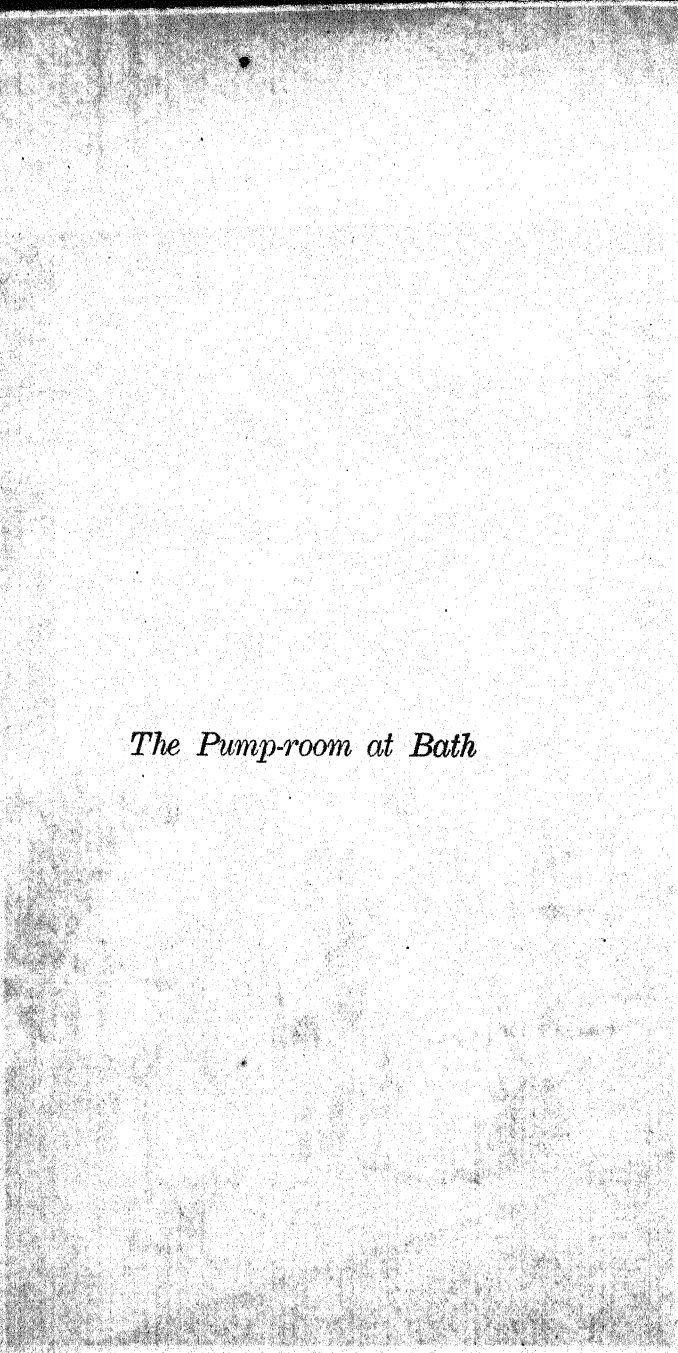
GOLDSMITH'S WORKS

IN TWELVE VOLUMES

VOL. VII.

BIOGRAPHIES—REVIEWS





The Pump-room at Bath

The Works of Oliver Goldsmith

Library Edition



Harper and Brothers
New York and London

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THE WORKS OF

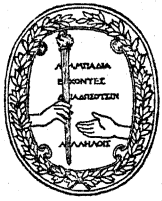
OLIVER GOLDSMITH

EDITED BY

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ILLUSTRATED

VOL. VII.



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MEMOIRS

OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

1759.

This Memoir (added to the works of its author for the first time in 1837) was written in 1759, by way of preface to a translation of the "Henriade" made by Purdon, and which Griffiths had undertaken to publish. "I know not," Goldsmith writes to his brother, "whether I should tell you—yet why should I conceal those trifles, or indeed anything, from you? There is a book of mine will be published in a few days, the life of a very extraordinary man—no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title that it is no more than a catch-penny. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds." Though announced for *speedy* publication in *The Public Advertiser*, of the 7th February, 1759, it has not been discovered as a separate publication. It was printed, however, in detached portions in *The Lady's Magazine* for 1761. It is a fragment, and chiefly of importance for its account of Voltaire's residence in England.

MEMOIRS OF M. DE VOLTAIRE.

THAT life which has been wholly employed in the study, is properly seen only in the author's writings; there is no variety to entertain nor adventure to interest us in the calm anecdotes of such an existence. Cold criticism is all the reader must expect, instead of instructive history.

Voltaire, however, may be justly exempted from the number of those obscure philosophers whose days have been passed between the fireside and the easy-chair. It is a doubt whether he appears more remarkable for the busy incidents of his life, or the fine productions of his retirement. If we regard the variety of his adventures, we shall be surprised how he had time to study; and if we look into his voluminous and spirited productions, we shall be apt to conclude that his whole employment was speculation. The truth is, no man can more truly be said to have lived. There is hardly a period of his existence which is not crowded with incidents that characterize either the philosopher or the man of the world. No poet was ever more universally known than he: none more praised or more censured; possessed of more sincere friends or inveterate enemies.

François Marie Arouet de Voltaire was born at Châtenay, near Paris, the 20th of February, 1694. His family was but mean, as his father was the maker of his own fortune. François Arouet was at first an usurer; in which employment, by the most extreme parsimony, he saved as much as entitled him to follow the business of a public notary. Frugality, in the lower orders of mankind, may be considered as a substitute to ambition: this old man was a miser with no other view; and when his circumstances permitted, he purchased a place under the Government of *greffier du châtelet;* which is equivalent to an under-secretary with us. In this office he acquired a fortune of about £500 a year, and had interest sufficient to get his family ennobled, by having the title of De added to the name of Voltaire.

Being therefore in easy circumstances, he was resolved to give his son the best education in his power, and accordingly, at the usual age, put him under the care of the celebrated Porée, who at that time professed rhetoric and philosophy in one of the colleges of Paris. Young Voltaire quickly discovered a capacity equal to any task, but at the same time an utter aversion to all that wore the appearance of study —enamoured with poetry and eloquence, yet showing his love by feeble efforts to imitate, rather than by a fondness of reading, the models proposed to his admiration. This dislike of learning the polite arts by precept, the manner in which they are generally taught, made him appear to his fellow-students as if endued but with a very ordinary capacity; nor did any of the assistant-masters view him in a light more advantageous. Porée, however, who was himself a man of genius, perceived in his pupil the sparks of latent fire, and saw with regret—for he loved the boy—that Voltaire was born a poet. To prevent his pursuing an employment that generally points to misfortune, and which, at the greatest and best, is attended with painful pre-eminence, Porée thought proper to change the course of his pupil's studies. He deprived him of his favorite poets, Virgil and Sophocles, and put into his hands Euclid, Tully, and the System of Des Cartes, at that time much in fashion in France. But Voltaire seemed wound up to no other pursuit than that of poetry; he neglected severer studies, and was ridiculed for his backwardness in the sciences by the whole university. The greatest genius can make no figure in philosophy without application; and application a young poet is ever averse to. The punishments of the academy, and the exhortations of his masters, were insufficient to influence him: anything that wore the face of industry he carefully avoided, and wherever pleasure presented, he was foremost in the pursuit. In conducting a boy of so refractory a disposition, other masters would have redoubled their punishments, or discontinued their care; but Porée, who perceived that all his attempts to thwart nature were to no effect, was at last resolved to indulge the genius of his pupil in his favorite pursuits, and to give that imagination a full liberty of dilating, which all his endeavors could not repress. "I perceive," said he, "that the youth will be miserable, in spite of all my efforts: he must be what nature has made him, a poet; let us, then, since we cannot make him happy, endeavor to make him great."

And now the course of Voltaire's studies was changed once more; all the enchanting prospects of poetic ground, and all the invaluable

treasures of antiquity, were opened before their youthful admirer. Few equalled, scarcely any excelled, Porée in the proper methods of forming a poet. He exhibited to his pupil not only the finest models, but directed his efforts in imitating them; showed him that the true method of copying the ancients was to draw after nature, and instructed him from the copious volume of mankind, of which a long acquaintance with the world had made him a perfect master. The whole college now began to turn their eyes with wonder upon a boy they had before considered in the most despicable light, and Voltaire seemed to glory in his conscious superiority. There were four prizes generally distributed in the year to the most deserving in the Belles-lettres: he had obtained three, and missed the fourth; however, he was resolved to have all or none. Accordingly, rejecting the three which were offered him, he continued another year at college, until he should obtain the four; which he did with uncommon applause.

When he had passed the usual time at college, his father was resolved to remove him home; by which means he might at once have an opportunity of seeing the world, and finishing his education. The world was too dangerous a scene for a youth of passions as strong as his imagination—in love with pleasure, and as yet seeing human nature only on the pleasing side. But his father, either not considering or regardless of these precautions, gave him an apartment in his own house, and indulged him, though but a boy of fifteen, in a degree of liberty which others are not allowed till a more advanced age. The truth is, the old man mistook his son's knowledge for prudence, and imagined that a lad so very wise in conversation would be equally so in action. In this he was deceived: Voltaire was a youth of exquisite sensibility, and men of such dispositions generally feel pleasure with a double relish; he had a constitution though not strong yet delicately pliant, and such a disposition as inclined him to society. His visage, which was thin, might, at first view, have passed for indifferent; but when he spoke it caught ineffable graces, and his soul seemed beaming through his eyes. His stature was about middle size, and his person, upon the whole, not at all disagreeable. Thus furnished, our young poet launched out into all the excesses of refined debauchery. There are in every great city a set of battered beaus who, too old for pleasure themselves, introduce every young fellow of spirit into what they call polite company. A kept mistress, an actress, or an opera dancer generally compose the society. These are all perfectly skilled in the

arts of coquetting, teach the young beginner how to make love, set his features, adjust his bow, and—pick his pocket. Into such company as this Voltaire was quickly introduced; and they failed not, according to custom, to flatter him into a high opinion of his parts, and to praise his wit, though incapable of relishing its delicacy. Imagine a youth, pleased with himself and everything about him, taking the lead in all conversation, giving a loose to every folly that happened to occur, uttering things which, when spoken, seemed to please, but which, upon reflection, appeared false or trivial!—such was the gay, thoughtless, good-natured Voltaire, in a circle of close, designing beings, who approved his sallies from flattery and not from their feelings; who despised his efforts to please, or enjoyed his folly with tacit malignity. His father saw with concern the company into which he was fallen: he knew by experience that to be a wit was the surest means of banishing friends and fortune, and saw that his son, by striving after the character of an amusing member of society, was giving up all pretensions of being an useful one. Admonition he thought might be serviceable, and accordingly he remonstrated very freely upon Voltaire's behavior. No youth could receive advice with a better grace than he, or make more faithful promises of amendment. But he was now fallen in love with Mademoiselle G——n, the actress, and lost upon her bosom every domestic concern.

Mademoiselle G——n was extremely pretty, and though but low in stature, finely shaped. Possessed of a vivacity often more pleasing than true wit, she talked and looked tenderness, and sometimes enlivened conversation with a *double entendre;* which, coming from pretty lips, is generally attended with the desired success. These were qualifications sufficient to captivate a person unacquainted with the world. Voltaire became enamored, and took every opportunity of indulging the capricious though expensive desires of a woman since noted for ruining the fortunes of several of her admirers. Wherever pleasure was to be sold, our young poet and his mistress were first to raise the auction. Extravagance, however, soon brings on want, and this threatened a separation. Mademoiselle G——n had no other passion than that general one which women entertain for the opposite sex; any other man equally good-natured, open, and simple would have been equally agreeable with Voltaire; she therefore felt no pain in the thoughts of separation. But it was quite otherwise with her youthful admirer; he entertained romantic ideas of the sex, considered woman as generally described in books, and looked

upon beauty as the transparent covering of virtue. The apprehension, therefore, of being obliged to part gave him no small uneasiness. The more this apprehension increased, the more diligent he was in contriving means to satisfy her rapacity. He had already extorted money from his father by various pretences; but this resource now began to fail him. His mistress had frequently assured him that it was polite to deceive the old man; that comedy every day afforded instances of this laudable disobedience; and often intimated that money must be supplied or love discontinued. What was to be done in such a dilemma? to subdue his passion was a task he was as yet quite unacquainted with; he was resolved, therefore, to add one falsehood more to his former account. In pursuance of this resolution, he gravely assured his father that the Cardinal Polignac, who was employed by the Court of France to adjust the plan of pacification at Utrecht, had consented to take him in his retinue; and as it was proper to appear genteelly on such an occasion, our adventurer requested a hundred pounds for his equipment, promising to regulate his future conduct by the strictest prudence. The old man was the more inclined to believe this story, as it was a place he had been soliciting for his son some time before; he therefore advanced the money, and Voltaire, rejoicing in the success of his stratagem, flew to share his joy and his acquisition with his charming deluder.

I am not insensible that, by recounting these trifling particulars of a great man's life, I may be accused of being myself a trifler; but such circumstances as these generally best mark a character. These youthful follies, like the fermentation of liquors, often disturb the mind only in order to its future refinement: a life spent in phlegmatic apathy resembles those liquors which never ferment, and are consequently always muddy. Let this, then, be my excuse, if I mention anything that seems derogatory from Voltaire's character, which will be found composed of little vices and great virtues. Besides, it is not here intended either to compose a panegyric or draw up an invective; truth only is my aim: an impartial view of his history may show him guilty of some errors, but it will at last turn the balance greatly in his favor.

But to proceed. In a few days the old man began to testify some uneasiness at seeing his son make no preparations for his intended journey; but lost all patience when he found that the cardinal had set out and left him behind. He had for some time known his correspondence with Mademoiselle G——n, and conjectured that her

apartment would be the most likely place to find him. He accordingly went to her house, and, finding the door by accident open, entered without ceremony; when, unfortunately, the first figure that presented was young Voltaire coming down-stairs, pale and emaciated both by his apprehensions and debauchery. The father, being resolved upon the severest correction, with his cane in his hand pursued the delinquent up-stairs. Voltaire now saw that a drubbing was inevitable, and therefore thought it the best way, if possible, to divert his father's anger by a jest. Accordingly, when he had run up to the third story, drawing his sword, he cried out to his father, who was not yet got up to the second, "Sir, you must excuse me if I consider our relationship now at an end, for we are at least three removes asunder."[1]

His father, however, in his present disposition, could by no means relish a jest: he desisted from his pursuit, but went directly away, meditating a much severer punishment. Voltaire, who thought the storm was over, went down to laugh away his fright with his mistress; and the young lovers began to be extremely facetious upon the awkward chagrin of the old man. But their mirth was soon interrupted by a file of musketeers, who came to conduct our poet to the Bastille for having drawn his sword upon his father. This was an early initiation into misery: to be snatched from the arms of an alluring mistress, and be confined in a gloomy prison, without fire, candle, pen, or ink, was a reverse of fortune which might throw a damp upon men of an ordinary degree of fortitude; but Voltaire bore it with an air that showed the utmost resolution; he entered his prison with the most cheerful serenity, repeating from his favorite poets such passages as were applicable to his circumstances. On such occasions of distress the poet, perhaps, has the advantage of all others; when forsaken by society, the Muse administers her friendly consolation, and softens even the horrors of confinement. A bit of red chalk was all that Voltaire had to serve instead of a pen, and the white walls of his prison supplied the place of paper; yet even with these rude materials he sketched out the first canto of his "Henriade." The traces of his pencil are, to this day, preserved in the chamber to which he was confined, with as much veneration as the paintings of Raphael in the galleries of the curious.

When he had remained three weeks in prison, his father, who had

[1] "Au troisième degré je ne connais pas de parent!"

taken this severe method only in order to his reformation, was appeased, and the delinquent was again admitted into favor. It is a doubt whether the incident of his imprisonment was more fortunate for him, or beneficial to the public. His intrepid behavior soon gained him the notice of the great; his confinement turned his mind, which was wholly dissipated on pleasure, from debauchery to ambition, and gave the world one of the greatest poets that any age has produced.

He now prepared in good earnest to follow the Cardinal Polignac to Utrecht; and some recommendatory letters which his father's interest had procured gave him reason to expect a favorable reception from his excellency. Accordingly, without taking leave of the companions of his debauchery, he set out upon his journey, and arriving at Utrecht, presented his letters of recommendation to the Cardinal. Polignac was one of the deepest scholars and most refined politicians of the age. His "Anti-Lucretius" is sufficient to establish his character as one of the first in the literary world; and his address at the treaty of Utrecht fully evinces his skill in the business of the cabinet. He was particularly remarkable for reading every man's real character upon the slightest acquaintance; and, notwithstanding all our young poet's precautions, this penetrating politician quickly perceived his violent attachment to pleasure. Yet he nevertheless had sufficient address to become a favorite, and scarcely a day passed in which the Cardinal did not spend some time in conversation with his gay libertine; for so he was pleased to call him. Madame Dunoyer relates some of the intrigues for which Voltaire was remarkable at Utrecht; but as they contain little more than what every reader may suggest—namely, his making love, and his addresses being crowned with success—I shall pass them by, particularly as he himself asserts the falsehood of all that his female biographer has been pleased to say of him.

Upon his return to Paris he had again an apartment in his father's house. Here he united the characters of the man of pleasure and the philosopher; dedicated the morning to study, and the evening to society. His companions now were very different from those he had some time before associated with; he began to have a reputation for genius, and some of the politest of either sex in Paris were pleased to admit him among the number of their intimates.

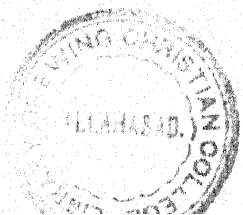
Our poet had always a desire of thinking differently from other people. He was particularly fond of controversy, and often mistook paradox for refinement. Of this fault he was more guilty in youth

than in riper age; for it was about this time that he thought proper to confine himself to his chamber, to draw up a new system of religion, and abolish the old one. He had been employed thus six or seven days; when his father, surprised at his keeping his chamber so closely, thought proper to enter and inquire the reason. When he perceived how the youth was employed he was almost unable to suppress his astonishment; but recollecting that it was impossible to convince by reason a vain young man, who neither had patience nor perhaps abilities for a slow and painful investigation, he was resolved to work, if possible, upon his passions. Accordingly, taking his son by the hand, he led him into his own apartment, and there, pointing to a large crucifix, exquisitely painted, which hung at one end of the room, "My son," said he, "you would alter the religion of your country—behold the fate of a reformer!" This seasonable remonstrance had the desired success; he laid by his controversial pieces, and turned to a subject of which he was much more capable. Fired with a love of antiquity, as he himself informs us, he was resolved to modernize the "Œdipus Tyrannus" of Sophocles, and try how a subject which Aristotle has asserted to be the fittest for tragedy could do upon the French theatre. They had hitherto seen not more than one or two tragedies on their stage without a love plot, and upon that all the other incidents generally turned. It was, therefore, a hardy undertaking, in so very young a man, to introduce Grecian severity, and show his countrymen that an instructive and interesting performance, without that effeminating passion, could be adapted even to the stage of a people who made love one of their most serious employments. This play was acted in the beginning of the year 1718: the public received it with the utmost indulgence; it was played several nights without intermission, and still continues to be performed with the highest applause. The author, however, has always been so modest as to attribute its success to the greatness of the subject and the excellence of the performers, rather than to the merit of the poet. The critics were divided in their judgment of this piece; some regarded it as too declamatory, and endeavored to show, which indeed was no difficult task, how much the Grecian tragedy was superior; others, considering it as the first-fruits of a young, aspiring genius, were pleased with the harmony and correctness of the versification and the classic propriety which ran through the whole. Among this number was Madame du Chatelet, a lady equally famous for wit and learning; perhaps still more known by her connection with our poet, and for

Madame Chatelet



the variety of beautiful poems which he has addressed to her. Her apartments might have justly been styled the tribunal of criticism; for they were every day frequented by all whose wit or learning gave them any eminence in the literary world. She took the poet under her protection; and those critics whom her wit could not bring over to his interests became proselytes to her beauty. In short, Voltaire owed his first rise to her; and she perhaps owes to him immortality. However, though the majority of critics were for him, there were still some refractory. Père Folard, and M. de la Motte of the French Academy, were of the number—the one remarkable for his learning, the other for the fineness of his genius and skill in criticism. They were the reputed authors of several anonymous strictures which were published against the "Œdipus" of Voltaire; nor did they seem very studious to decline the imputation, though formerly professing themselves among the number of his friends. Men of the first rank in literature often, like the old trees in a forest, keep off those beams of favor from the younger shoots, which are, perhaps, of their own production. De la Motte, either envying the success of our poet or choosing to enjoy the public favor without a rival, was resolved to show the indifference of Voltaire's performance, rather by example than criticism; and accordingly wrote a tragedy upon the very same subject. From the endeavors of a man of established reputation like him much was expected; particularly as he had the errors of Voltaire before him to avoid, and his excellences, which he might improve. The town waited with impatience to compare these efforts of contending genius, and their curiosity was at last gratified. La Motte's performance appeared, with a large party to support it; and it accordingly met the fate of all plays which are supported by party—it languished four nights, and then sunk into oblivion. This was a conquest Voltaire's most sanguine hopes could not have suggested: however, such was his ambition, that he was not merely contented with victory, but was resolved to triumph; not satisfied with enjoying the fruits of conquest, but bent upon proclaiming himself conqueror. This, indeed, was a fault of which he was always culpable: no person ever gained the victory in literary contentions so often as he has done; but while he pursued his advantages too far, he turned his opponents into enemies, and when they could no longer lessen his reputation as a wit, they often strove to blacken his character as a man. He found the majority now wholly on his side; he saw that none praised the tragedy of La Motte but such as were attached by private connections to



his person: in order, then, to insure his success, he was determined to show that his rival was his inferior, not only in poetry, but in criticism also; for a skill in which he had, till now, been especially remarkable. La Motte had written an essay against the rules of the drama, in which he endeavored to show that its laws had been established, not from nature but caprice, from fashion and not from feelings. This Voltaire undertook to answer; which, as it is both a fine piece of criticism, and an instance of the delicacy with which this great man treated his opponent, I shall beg leave to translate:

"I shall not presume to speak of the tragedies of either Père Folard or M. de la Motte: my censure or my praise would appear equally suspicious. I am still farther from bestowing anything like panegyric upon my own, being convinced that rules alone never made a genius. Conscious I am that all the fine reasoning and delicate remark that have been exhausted of late years upon this subject, are not equal to one single scene dictated by a fine imagination. There is more to be learned from reading one of the tragedies of Corneille or Racine, than from all the precepts of the Abbé d'Aubignac. All the books composed by connoisseurs upon the art of painting, convey not half the instructions of a single head which has come from the pencil of Angelo or Raphael.

"The principles of all arts which depend upon the imagination are easy and simple, equally founded in nature and in reason. The best and worst poets have composed upon the same; they have both used similar materials, and the difference only lies in their application. The same thing happens in music, and even in painting. Poussin is directed by the very rules which conduct the most wretched dauber. It is as needless, therefore, in a poet to attempt to prejudice the public in favor of his performance by introductory criticism, as it would be in a painter or musician to lay down rules to prove that the spectators or the audience must be pleased with their respective performances.

"However, as M. de la Motte has thought proper to establish rules different from those which have conducted our great masters in the art of poetry, it is but just to defend the laws of antiquity; not, indeed, because they are ancient, but because they are natural and useful, and also as they are in some danger from so formidable an opponent.

"This gentleman begins with proscribing the unities of action, time, and place. Those are so united with each other that he who

combats one attacks them all. The French were the first among the moderns who revived the laws of the drama; the neighboring nations were long before they could be brought to submit to a restraint which seemed so severe; but as this restraint proceeded from nature, and reason taught them the justice of the compliance, in time they were brought to submit. At present, even in England, their poets are fond of informing the public in their prefaces that the time of the action and the representation are equal; and they are even more strict in this particular than we who have been their masters.

"Every country now begins to regard those times as barbarous, when the laws of the stage were either not practised or not known. Shakspeare and Lopez de Vega are admired, but not imitated. All are ready to pay France their acknowledgments for having pointed out this just and natural simplicity. Who would have thought that a Frenchman would be the first again to introduce primeval barbarity?

"Though I had no other answer to make to M. de la Motte, but that Corneille, Racine, Molière, Addison, Congreve, and Maffei have all observed the rules of the drama, this alone might be sufficient to silence my opponent; but M. de la Motte deserves to be opposed with reasons, and not by authorities.

"A tragedy or comedy has been defined the representation of one action. Should it be demanded, why of one only, and not of two or three together, the reasons are obvious. Either because the mind is incapable of attending to two or three objects at once, or because our concern in the events is lessened by being divided, or because we are displeased to see two actions in the same picture. Uniformity is a constituent of beauty, imprinted on our souls by nature; and all the efforts of art excel in proportion as they imitate the models she draws.

"For these reasons unity of place is also essential; for one and the same action cannot be transacted in different places at the same time. If the personages whom I behold in the first act are at Athens, how can they be in Persia in the second? Le Brun has not painted Alexander at Arbela and in the Indies on the same canvas. 'But,' says M. de la Motte, 'there is nothing surprising if a nation which has not studied itself into a fondness for rule should be pleased at the representation of Coriolanus, condemned at Rome in the first act, received among the Volscians in the third, and besieging Rome in the fourth.' Yet why should a sensible people be so much against those rules, which are made only for their pleasure? Are there not, in a subject thus conducted, three distinct tragedies; and were it put in verse would it

not resemble rather a history or a romance than a theatrical performance? Take away the unity of place, and you necessarily destroy that of action. The unity of time is naturally connected with the two former. Let us, then, hold to the three unities, as the great Corneille has laid them down: in these we shall find every other rule of the drama contained, resulting from these, or conspiring to assist them.

"M. de la Motte, however, is pleased to call them principles first invented by fancy, and supported by fashion: he maintains that they may with propriety be dispensed with in our tragedies, since they are entirely neglected in the opera. This method of reasoning somewhat resembles the absurdity of the politician, who would reform a regular government by the example of an anarchy. Absurdity, joined with magnificence, characterize the opera. In this the ears and the eyes find more entertainment than the mind. A subjection of the words to the music renders the most ridiculous extravagances excusable. Cities are ransacked in recitative: the palaces of Pluto and of the sun, of gods and devils, of magicians and monsters, rise, form a dance, and disappear in the twinkling of an eye. We tolerate, nay, are pleased with these extravagances, because the spectator in such circumstances imagines himself transported into a fairy land; and, provided he is entertained with good music, fine dancing, and a few interesting scenes, he is content. It would be as ridiculous to demand unity of action, time, and place in a pleasing opera, as to introduce dancing devils into a regular tragedy.

"Yet, though these regularities may be dispensed with in the opera, the best we have of this kind are those in which the unities are least violated. If I am not mistaken, there are some in which dramatic propriety is inviolably preserved; which serves to prove how necessary, natural, and interesting it is to every spectator. How unjust, therefore, is it to condemn our nation of levity for disapproving in one species of composition what we approve in another! In tragedy we require perfection; there is in it no music to divert the attention, nor dances to confound; all our pleasure depends upon intellect alone; we there admire the address of the poet, who, in one day and in one place, describes a single action which charms without fatigue, and fills the mind without confusion; where our pleasure rises by just degrees, and terminates with moral propriety. The more difficult this simplicity appears, the more it is cheering; and we find upon examination that most of our pleasure results from the various uniformity of the representation.

"M. de la Motte is not content with depriving us of theatrical propriety; he would also banish poetry from the stage and have all our pieces represented in prose. It is a little extraordinary that an ingenious writer, possessed of an imagination truly poetic, who has seldom written prose except to vindicate or explain his own poetry, should write against verse with the same contempt with which he has written against Homer; whom, nevertheless, he has thought proper to translate. Neither Virgil, Tasso, Boileau, Racine, or Pope ever wrote against poetry, nor Lully against music, nor Newton against astronomy. There are sometimes men found who fancy themselves superior to their profession—the surest symptoms of their being actually below it; but this is the first time we have seen any attempting to asperse those talents to which they owe all their reputation. There are already too many who, having no acquaintance with the charms of poetry, affect to despise it. Paris abounds with men, otherwise of good understandings, who are naturally destitute of organs capable of relishing harmony; to such music is but noise, and poetry but ingenious trifling. Should these be informed that a person of merit, and who has composed five or six volumes of poetry, is of their opinion, would they not be apt to regard all other poets as fools, and him as the only one of all his brethren who had found the use of his reason? Let me, then, for the honor of our profession, endeavor to answer him; even let me add, for the honor of a country which owes part of its reputation among strangers to a perfection in this very art which he affects to despise.

"It is advanced by this gentleman that rhyme is a modern invention, and had its rise in times of ignorance and barbarity; yet, notwithstanding this, all nations, except the ancient Greeks and Romans, have rhymed, and continue the custom to this day. The return of similar sounds is so natural to mankind, that we find rhymes obtain even in the most savage regions, as well as in Italy, Spain, France, and England. Montaigne presents us with an American ode, composed in this manner; and in one of the papers of *The Spectator*, written by Mr. Addison, we are presented with the translation of a Lapland ode, originally composed in rhyme.[1]

"The Greek—'quibus dedit ore rotundo musa loqui'—placed in an indulgent climate, and favored by nature with finer organs than other nations, formed a language which, by the length or shortness of its

[1] See *The Spectator*, No. 366. The paper in question was written by Steele.

syllables, expressed the calm or the impetuous dictates of the mind. From this happy variety in the construction of their language resulted such music in their prose, as well as verse, as no nation but the ancient Italians could ever succeed in imitating.

"It is not, however, rhyme alone, but measure also, which this ingenious gentleman condemns. Before the time of Herodotus history was written only in verse; this custom the Greeks borrowed from the ancient Egyptians, a people politic, learned, and wise. It was founded in nature; for the end of history being to preserve an account of the actions of a few great personages, which might serve as examples to posterity, as men had not yet attained the art of swelling the transactions of some obscure convent or insignificant village into several folios, nothing was transmitted but what was worth remembering; nothing but what was remarkable was generally treasured up in the memory as a guide to action. Verse, therefore, was proper to assist in this particular; accordingly, the first legislators, founders of religion, and historians were poets by profession. On such occasions, however, poetry must necessarily have wanted either harmony or precision. Virgil at last appeared, who united these two excellences which seemed so incompatible. Boileau and Racine had the same success; a person who has read all the three, who knows that they are translated into almost all the European languages, but idly employs his talents in endeavoring to render them contemptible: such censure often reverts upon the accuser.

"I rank Boileau and Racine in the same class with Virgil, in regard to versification; for had the author of the 'Æneid' been born a Frenchman, it is probable he would have written like them; and had they lived in ancient Rome, they would have moulded the Latin language into the same harmonious cadence with the celebrated Mantuan. When, therefore, M. de la Motte censures versification as ridiculous, mechanical, trifling, he not only accuses our poets, but all those of antiquity. Virgil and Horace have been as assiduous as we in the mechanism of their verses. A happy arrangement of dactyl and spondee was as difficult as our rhyme and metre. Their labor must certainly have been great; since the 'Æneid,' after the corrections of eleven years, was still thought far short of requisite perfection.

"But this ingenious author still asserts that turning any scene of tragedy into prose diminishes neither its force nor its beauty. To prove this assertion he transposes the first scene of 'Mithridates,' and has thus rendered it intolerable to even the meanest capacity. 'But

still,' continues he, 'our neighbors have rejected rhyme in their tragedies.' This must be granted; but then they are written in verse, which, though without rhyme, is, from the nature of their languages, harmonious. Should we attempt to cast off a yoke which was worn by Corneille and Racine, we might, perhaps, be subjected to do it from an inability to imitate rather than a desire to reform. The Italians and the English can dispense with rhyme, since their poetry has several liberties which we want: every language has its particular genius —inflections peculiarly its own; a construction of periods different from all others, and a particular use of the auxiliary verbs: perspicuity and elegance is the genius of ours; we admit of no transpositions in our poetry, but the words must flow in the exact order of our ideas. Hence, therefore, proceeds the unavoidable necessity of rhymes, to make a distinction between our prose and our poetry. He compares our poets, our Corneilles, Racines, and Boileaus, to a juggler who is employed in throwing a grain of corn through the eye of a needle; adding, that all such puerilities have no other merit but that of difficulty surmounted.

"I must confess that bad verses pretty much fall under this censure. They differ from bad prose only by the addition of rhyme; and this advantage alone neither gives merit to the poet nor pleasure to the reader. What charms us is the harmony which results from this merit. Whoever encounters a difficulty merely for the sake of overcoming it, without expecting any other advantage, is little better than a fool; but he who brings pleasure from objects which seem incapable of affording any is certainly meritorious. It is a laborious task to form a fine statue, to paint a striking picture, to compose pleasing music, or good verses. Wherefore, the names of those great men who have surmounted the respective difficulties will last, perhaps, longer than the kingdoms which gave them birth.

"I could continue this dispute to greater length, but it would probably be regarded as proceeding from personal resentment; and my intentions might be branded with a malignity from which I am as remote as from the sentiments of my ingenious adversary. It gives me much greater pleasure to profit by many judicious reflections spread through his book than to controvert his opinions. Let it be sufficient, then, that I have endeavored to defend an art I have ever loved; an art which he should have defended also."

This criticism, which conceals a fine satire upon the author it professes to answer, was not published till the year 1730, though written,

and communicated to M. Voltaire's friends, long before. M. de la Motte himself pretended to approve it, yet inwardly felt all the resentment of disappointed ambition, and (as if from the time Voltaire had defended poetry he was no longer to have quarter from his brothers of the profession) he was ever after persecuted by party, and marked as an object of envy and reproach. Père Folard soon after wrote a tragedy upon the same subject, but it was more short-lived than even the former attempt of La Motte; serving only to advance the reputation of the first "Œdipus," and to increase the number of the friends and the enemies of M. Voltaire.

There is, perhaps, no situation more uneasy than that of being foremost in the republic of letters. If a man who writes to please the public cannot at the same time stoop to flattery, he is certainly made unhappy for life. There are a hundred writers of inferior merit continually expecting his approbation: these must be all applauded, or made enemies; the public must be deceived by ill-placed praise, or dunces provoked into unremitting persecution. This under-tribe in the literary commonwealth perfectly understand the force of combinations, are liberal in their mutual commendations, and actually enjoy all the pleasures of fame without being so much as known to the public; while the man of eminence is regarded as an outcast of their society, a fit object at which to level all their invective, and every advance he makes towards reputation only lifts his head nearer to the storm; till at last he finds that, instead of fame, he has been all his life only earning reproach—till he finds himself possessed of professing friends and sincere enemies.

Fontenelle and Voltaire were men of unequal merit; yet how different has been the fate of either! Fontenelle was as passionately fond of adulation as Voltaire was ever averse to flattery. The one kindly told every blockhead that he had wit; the other honestly advised him to discontinue a profession in which he was by no means likely to succeed: the one has received all his fame while living; the other must not expect unmixed applause till dead: the one was prudent, insincere, and happy; the other generous, open, and regarded with detestation.

But, though Voltaire was now fairly listed into an open war with all the dunces of society, yet he still had friends of another denomination, who by their power protected him, and by their company made him forget that he had enemies. Madame du Chatelet was of this number. At her house he generally spent the mornings, among

the learned of Paris, who composed the levee of this learned lady. The sciences then seemed to triumph when patronized by beauty. Madame Chatelet had many personal charms; and though a hard student, her complexion never called in assistant red to heighten its color. She dictated to an admiring circle every morning from Plato, Newton, Clarke, and Leibnitz; and was thought as great an adept in philosophy as the deepest doctor of the Sorbonne. Voltaire soon perceived his deficiency in the sciences; and as he knew that an excellence in them was the only way to secure his mistress, he set about attaining them with the most intense application. As he increased in learning his intimacy increased in proportion; and at last an intercourse which began in friendship turned into a passion of a much more masterly nature. His visits became more frequent, his behavior more submissive, and the philosopher was lost in the gallant. Madame du Chatelet, whose soul knew no other passion but that of science, at first regarded the change in his behavior with indifference, but soon perceived the real motive, and was not entirely displeased at the discovery. There is a principle of vanity in the sex which gives them pleasure at the acquisition of a new lover, though they have no intention to accept him. She therefore gave him an opportunity of declaring his regard, and of professing a passion which his actions had before sufficiently indicated. Her answer, however, was very different from what he had expected: she informed him, with an apathy truly stoical, that she neither disliked his addresses nor entirely approved of them. She had no objection to a lover, provided he was pleased to be content with what she could give. Minds could unite and form a happy intercourse without indulging any coarser appetites; and she concluded by recommending to him the Banquet of Plato, as containing her system of love—a system which she was determined to act up to; and she found none more fit than M. Voltaire to be the object of so pure a flame.

Our poet now perceived that books had spoiled her for a mistress, and that she was resolved to sacrifice the substance to the shadow. Yet, as she was in some measure beautiful, as she seemed happy in his conversation and could still be a charming friend, he was resolved to accept of the terms she offered; to be contented with the spare diet which she could afford, and look for more substantial entertainment from others. An opportunity soon offered of this kind.

The Marchioness de Pire, a young widow of exquisite beauty, had taken a fancy to our poet; and, as she was possessed of a large joint-

ure, had some intentions of marrying him. She found means to have Voltaire informed of her inclinations, and took care to have her nobility and fortune placed in the most advantageous point of view. Voltaire, who loved the sex but hated matrimony, seemed to be happy in her proposal, and begged an interview, in which our lovers seemed mutually pleased with each other. As all his intentions were to please the lady and himself without the previous ceremony, he declined all conversation upon matrimony, but talked of disinterested passion, unconfined rapture, and all the cant of an insidious designer. The marchioness, who was as virtuous as beautiful, quickly perceived the tendency of his discourse, and thought proper to break off a conversation which took a turn not at all to her inclinations. At parting she gave him hopes, and enjoined him secrecy. He accordingly promised the strictest honor, and with a heart elated with vanity he went to communicate his happiness to all his friends. As he unsuspectingly made every person that professed the least regard for him a confidant, among the rest he happened to tell his success to a gentleman who was actually his rival. The consequence of this indiscreet confidence was, that the marchioness was informed of the whole, and proscribed our repentant lover forever from her presence. In such a disappointment the muse was his consolation; he worked the adventure into a comedy, which he dedicated to his unforgiving mistress. The dedication, which it is impossible to translate with elegance equal to the original, runs in plain prose thus: "Thou who hast beauty without pride, and vivacity without indiscretion; whom Heaven has formed with every gift it could bestow; a mind seriously solid, or rapturously gay; accept this picture of the indiscretion of a lover, who lost a mistress by boasting of her favors. Had the heroine of this piece been possessed of thy beauty, who could blame the lover for mentioning so charming a mistress, either through excess of vanity or excess of love?"

But one adventure more of this nature. The Platonic passion between Voltaire and Madame du Chatelet was now become a subject of conversation all over Paris. His inconstancy was well known, and it was thought something strange that his attachment to one mistress should have so long a continuance. M. Piron, a man of infinite humor, was resolved to try the sincerity of his passion; not by presenting him with a real but with an imaginary mistress. With this intent he composed a panegyric on Voltaire in the highest strain of flattery, and presented it to him as coming from a lady in one of the

provinces, who was enraptured with his poetry and had almost conceived a passion for his person. Voltaire read the poem, found it inimitable, and fancied a thousand beauties in a lady of so fine discernment. In short, he was actually fallen in love with a creature of his own imagination, and entreated his dear, ugly friend—for so he familiarly used to call Piron—to procure him an interview with a lady of so much merit. Piron promised in a few days to gratify his request; and in the mean time came every morning to tell Voltaire that the young lady was upon her journey, and would arrive very shortly; adding many pathetic exclamations on her beauty, and the delicacy of her behavior. Our poet was at last wound up to the height of expectation; which, when Piron saw, he informed him that the lady was actually arrived, that the chief motive of her journey was to see a man so justly celebrated us M. Voltaire, and that she entreated the honor of his company that very evening. Our poet, in raptures, prepared himself for the interview, which he expected with the utmost impatience.

The hour at last came, and Voltaire eagerly flew to satisfy at once his love and his curiosity. Upon being introduced into the apartment of his fancied angel, he was at first a little disconcerted to find Madame du Chatelet of the party; but guess his confusion when he beheld his ugly friend, dressed up in a lappet-head and petticoat, approach to salute him. In short, he was informed that Piron himself was the fair one who wrote the panegyric, and who consequently expected the proper return of gratitude. "Well," said Voltaire, turning his disappointment to a jest, "if Piron had a grain less wit I could never have forgiven him." This adventure has since served as the groundwork of a comedy called "La Métromanie," infinitely the best modern performance upon the French theatre.

Some disappointments of this kind served to turn our poet from a passion which only tended to obstruct his advancement in more exalted pursuits. His mind, which at that time was pretty well balanced between pleasure and philosophy, quickly began to incline to the latter. He now thirsted after a more comprehensive knowledge of mankind than either books or his own country could possibly bestow.

England, about this time, was coming into repute throughout Europe as the land of philosophers. Newton, Locke, and others began to attract the attention of the curious, and drew hither a concourse of learned men from every part of Europe. Not our learning alone, but our politics also, began to be regarded with admiration: a govern-

ment in which subordination and liberty were blended in such just proportions was now generally studied as the finest model of civil society. This was an inducement sufficient to make Voltaire pay a visit to this land of philosophers and of liberty.

Accordingly, in the year 1726, he came over to England. A previous acquaintance with Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester, and the Lord Bolingbroke, was sufficient to introduce him among the polite, and his fame as a poet got him the acquaintance of the learned, in a country where foreigners generally find but a cool reception. He only wanted introduction: his own merit was enough to procure the rest. As a companion no man ever exceeded him when he pleased to lead the conversation; which, however, was not always the case. In company which he either disliked or despised, few could be more reserved than he; but when he was warmed in discourse, and had got over a hesitating manner which sometimes he was subject to, it was rapture to hear him. His meagre visage seemed insensibly to gather beauty; every muscle in it had meaning, and his eye beamed with unusual brightness. The person who writes this Memoir, who had the honor and the pleasure of being his acquaintance, remembers to have seen him in a select company of wits of both sexes at Paris,[1] when the subject happened to turn upon English taste and learning. Fontenelle, who was of the party, and who, being unacquainted with the language or authors of the country he undertook to condemn, with a spirit truly vulgar, began to revile both. Diderot, who liked the English, and knew something of their literary pretensions, attempted to vindicate their poetry and learning, but with unequal abilities. The company quickly perceived that Fontenelle was superior in the dispute, and were surprised at the silence which Voltaire had preserved all the former part of the night, particularly as the conversation happened to turn upon one of his favorite topics. Fontenelle continued his triumph till about twelve o'clock, when Voltaire appeared at last roused from his reverie. His whole frame seemed animated. He began his defence with the utmost elegance mixed with spirit, and now and then let fall the finest strokes of raillery upon his antagonist; and his harangue lasted till three in the morning. I must confess that, whether from national partiality or from the elegant sensibility of his manner, I never was so much charmed,

[1] Goldsmith, it is said, could not have seen Voltaire in Paris (Forster's *Life*, vol. i. p. 67). Voltaire quitted Paris in 1750, and never returned to it till 1778.

nor did I ever remember so absolute a victory as he gained in this dispute.

Upon his arrival in England his first care was to learn so much of the language as might enable him to mix in conversation, and study more thoroughly the genius of the people. Foreigners are unanimous in allowing the English language to be the most difficult to learn of any in Europe. Some have spent years in the study to no purpose; but such was the application, and such the memory of our poet, that in six weeks he was able to speak it with tolerable propriety. In short, his conduct in this particular was such as may serve for a model to future travellers. The French who before visited this island were never at the trouble of attaining our language, but contented with barely describing the buildings and palaces of the kingdom, and transcribing a character of the people from former travellers, who were themselves unacquainted with our national peculiarities. Accordingly, we find few of their books in which the English are not characterized as morose, melancholy, excessive lovers of pudding,[1] and haters of mankind. This stupid account has been continued down from Scaliger to Muralt, while the virtues and vices which were peculiar to the country were wholly unknown. Voltaire quickly perceived that pride seemed to be our characteristic quality; a source from whence we derived our excellences as well as our defects. He perceived that the only way to understand the English was to learn their language, adopt their manners, and even to applaud their oddities. With this view, when sufficiently initiated into our language, he joined in companies of every rank; lords, poets, and artisans were successively visited, and he attained at the same time a proficiency in our language, laws, and government, and thorough insight into our national character. Before him our reputation for learning had for some time been established in Europe; but then we were regarded as entirely destitute of taste, and our men of wit known not even by name among the literati. He was the first foreigner who saw the amazing irregular beauties of Shakspeare, gave Milton the character he deserved, spoke of every English poet with some degree of applause,[2] and opened a new page

[1] "Monsieur de Voltaire says that the English plays are like the English *puddings:* nobody has any taste for them but themselves."—*Fanshaw*, in SPENCE'S *Anecdotes*, ed. Singer, p. 330.

[2] "I told him (Johnson) that Voltaire, in a conversation with me, had distinguished Pope and Dryden thus: 'Pope drives a handsome chariot, with a couple of neat, trim nags; Dryden a coach, and six stately horses.' JOHNSON:

of beauty to the eyes of his astonished countrymen. It is to him we owe that our language has taken place of the Italian among the polite, and that even ladies are taught to admire Milton, Pope, and Otway. The greatest part of our poet's time, during a residence of two years in England, was spent at Wandsworth, the seat of his Excellency Sir Everard Falkener. With this gentleman he had contracted an intimacy at Paris; and as Sir Everard had insisted upon his company before he left France, he could now not refuse. Here he spent his time in that tranquillity and learned ease which are so grateful to men of speculation; had leisure to examine the difference between our government and that of which he was born a subject; and to improve by our example his natural passion for liberty.

He was resolved, however, to give some lasting testimony of that love which he had for freedom, and which has ever made one of the strongest features in his character. The elder Brutus, condemning his own son in its cause, seemed a fine subject for this purpose, and naturally suited to the British theatre. The first act of this play he accordingly wrote in English, and communicated it to his friends for their approbation. It was somewhat surprising to find a stranger, who had resided in the country but one year, attempt so arduous an undertaking; but still more so to find him skilled in the beauties and force of our language. The reader may be pleased to see how he wrote in English;[1] he makes Brutus, in the second scene of the first act, thus vindicate the cause of freedom:

Brutus. "Allege not ties; his (Tarquin's) crimes have broke them all. The gods themselves, whom he has offended, have declared against him. Which of our rights has he not trod upon? True, we have sworn to

'Why, sir, the truth is, they both drive coaches and six; but Dryden's horses are either galloping or stumbling: Pope's go at a steady, even trot.'"—BOSWELL, by Croker, p. 173.

[1] "This noted author (Voltaire) about twenty years past resided in London. His acquaintance with the Laureate (Cibber) brought him frequently to the theatre, where (he confessed) he improved in the English orthography more in a week than he should otherwise have done by labored study in a month. I furnished him every evening with the play of the night, which he took with him into the orchestra (his accustomed seat). In four or five months he not only conversed in elegant English, but wrote it with great propriety. In time he wore off the prejudice he first conceived at the catastrophe of our English tragedy, the custom of killing upon the stage never having been introduced on the French theatre, till the 'Zara' of this author, which he planned from Shakspeare's 'Othello.'"—CHETWOOD'S *History of the Stage*, 12mo, 1749, p. 46.

be his subjects, but we have not sworn to be his slaves. You say you've seen our senate in humble suppliance pay him here their vows. Even here himself has sworn to be our father, and make the people happy in his guidance. Broke from his oaths, we are let loose from ours; since he has transgressed our laws, his the rebellion, Rome is free from guilt."[1]

This tragedy he afterwards completed in French; and at Paris it met with the fate he had foreseen. No piece was ever translated into a greater number of foreign languages, more liked by strangers, or more decried at home. He dedicated it to Lord Bolingbroke; and as the dedication contains a fine parallel between the English and French theatres, I shall beg leave to translate some part of it here:

"As it was too venturous an innovation, my lord, to attempt to write a tragedy in French without rhyme, and take such liberties as are allowed in England and Italy, I was at least determined to transplant those beauties from the English stage which I thought not incompatible with French regularity. Certain it is the English theatre is extremely defective. I have heard yourself say there was scarcely a perfect tragedy in the language, but to compensate this, you have several scenes which are admirable. Almost all your tragic writers have been likewise deficient in that regularity and simplicity of plot, that propriety of diction, that elegance of style, and those hidden strokes of art, for which we are remarkable since the times of Corneille. However, your most irregular pieces have a peculiar merit; they excel in action, while ours are frequently tedious declamations, and, at best, conversation rather than a picture of passion. Our excessive delicacy often puts us upon making an uninteresting recital of what should rather be represented to the eyes of the spectator. Our

[1] *Brutus.*—"N'alléguez point ces nœuds que le crime a rompus,
Ces dieux qu'il outragea, ces droits qu'il a perdus.
Nous avons fait, Arons, en lui rendant hommage,
Serment d'obéissance, et non point d'esclavage;
Et puisqu'il vous souvient d'avoir vu dans ces lieux,
Le sénat à ses pieds faisant pour lui des vœux,
Songez qu'en ce lieu même, à cet autel auguste,
Devant ces mêmes dieux, il jura d'être juste,
De son peuple et de lui tel était le lien:
Il nous rend nos serments lorsqu'il trahit le sien;
Et dès qu'aux lois de Rome il ose être infidèle,
Rome n'est plus sujette, et lui seul est rebelle."

poets are afraid to hazard anything new before an audience composed of such as turn all that is not the fashion into ridicule.

"The inconvenience of our theatre also is another cause that our representations frequently appear dry and unentertaining. The spectators being allowed to sit on the stage, destroy almost all propriety of action. For this reason, those decorations which are so much recommended by the ancients can be but very rarely introduced. Thus it happens that the actors can never pass from one apartment into another without being seen by the audience, and all theatrical illusion must consequently be destroyed.

"How could we, for instance, introduce the ghost of Pompey, or the genius of Brutus, into the midst of a parcel of young fellows crowded upon the theatre, and who only stand there to laugh at all that is transacted? How could we, as the late Mr. Addison has done, have the body of Marcus borne in upon the stage before his father? If he should hazard a representation of this nature, the whole pit would rise against the poet, and the ladies themselves would be apt to hide their faces.

"With what pleasure have I seen at London your tragedy of 'Julius Cæsar,' which, though a hundred and fifty years old, still continues the delight of the people! I do not here attempt to defend the barbarous irregularity with which it abounds. What surprises me is, that there are not more in a work written in an age of ignorance, by a man who understood not Latin, and who had no other master but a happy genius. The piece is faulty; but, amid such a number, still with what rapture do we see Brutus, with his dagger stained with the blood of Cæsar, haranguing the people!

"The French would never suffer a chorus composed of plebeians and artisans to appear upon the theatre; nor would they permit the body of Cæsar to be exposed, or the people excited from the rostrum. Custom, the queen of this world, changes at pleasure the taste of nations, and turns the sources of joy often into objects of disgust.

"The Greeks have exhibited objects upon their stage that would be equally disgusting to a French audience. Hippolytus, bruised by his fall, comes to count his wounds, and to pour forth the most lamentable cries. Philoctetes appears with his wound open, and the black gore streaming from it. Œdipus, covered with the blood which flowed from the sockets of his eyes, complains both of gods and men. In a word, many of the Greek tragedies abound with exaggeration.

"I am not ignorant that both the Greeks and the English have

frequently erred, in producing what is shocking instead of what should be terrible—the disgusting and the incredible for what should have been tragic and marvellous. The art of writing was in its infancy at Athens in the time of Æschylus, and at London in the time of Shakspeare. However, both the one and the other, with all their faults, frequently abound with a fine pathetic, and strike us with beauties beyond the reach of art to imitate. Those Frenchmen who, only acquainted with translations or common report, pretend to censure either, somewhat resemble the blind man who should assert that the rose is destitute of beauty because he perceives the thorns by the touch.

"But, though sometimes the two nations of which I am speaking transcend the bounds of propriety, and present us with objects of affright instead of terror, we, on the other hand, as scrupulous as they are rash, stop short of beauty for fear of being carried beyond it, and seldom arrive at the pathetic for fear of transgressing its bounds.

"I am by no means for having the theatre become a place of carnage, as we often find in Shakspeare and his successors, who, destitute of his genius, have only imitated his faults; but still I insist that there are numberless incidents which may at present appear shocking to a French spectator, which, if set off with elegance of diction and propriety of representation, would be capable of giving a pleasure beyond what we can at present conceive."

This gives us a tolerably just representation of the state in which Voltaire found the French theatre. His "Œdipus" was written in this dry manner, where most of the terrible incidents were delivered in cold recitation, and not represented before the spectator. But, by observing our tragedies, like a skilful artist, he joined their fire to French correctness and formed a manner peculiarly his own.

In studies of this nature he spent his time at Wandsworth, still employed either improving himself in our own language, or borrowing its beauties to transplant into his own. His leisure hours were generally spent in the company of our poets—Congreve, Pope, Young, etc.—or among such of our nobility as were remarkable either for arts or arms, as Peterborough, Oxford, and Walpole. He was frequently heard to say that Peterborough had taught him the art of despising riches, Walpole the art of acquiring them, but Harley alone the secret of being contented.

The first time he visited Mr. Congreve he met with a reception very different from what he had expected. The English dramatist, grown rich by means of his profession, affected to despise it, and as-

sured Voltaire that he chose rather to be regarded as a gentleman than a poet. This was a meanness which somewhat disgusted the Frenchman, particularly as he himself owed all his reputation to his excellence in poetry; he therefore informed Mr. Congreve that his fame as a writer was the only inducement he had to see him, and though he could condescend to desire the acquaintance of a man of wit and learning, he was above soliciting the company of any private gentleman whatsoever.[1] The reflection of another upon this occasion was, that he certainly is below the profession who presumes to think himself above it.

M. Voltaire has often told his friends that he never observed in himself such a succession of opposite passions as he experienced upon his first interview with Mr. Pope. When he first entered the room, and perceived our poor melancholy English poet, naturally deformed, and wasted as he was with sickness and study, he could not help regarding him with the utmost compassion. But when Pope began to speak, and to reason upon moral obligations, and dress the most delicate sentiments in the most charming diction, Voltaire's pity began to be changed into admiration, and at last even into envy. It is not uncommon with him to assert that no man ever pleased him so much in serious conversation, nor any whose sentiments mended so much upon recollection.[2]

There is a story commonly told of his being in company with Dr. Young[3] and some others, when the conversation happened to turn

[1] "Congreve had one defect, which was, his entertaining too mean an idea of his first profession, though it was to this he owed his fame and fortune. He spoke of his works as of trifles that were beneath him; and hinted to me, at our first conversation, that I should visit him on no other footing than that of a gentleman, who had led a life of plainness and simplicity. I answered, that had he been so unfortunate as to be a mere gentleman I should never have come to see him; and I was very much disgusted at so unseasonable a piece of vanity."—VOLTAIRE, *Letters concerning the English Nation.*

"Voltaire has been charmingly absurd. He who laughed at Congreve for despising the rank of author, and affecting the gentleman, set out post for a hovel he has in France to write from thence, and style himself *Gentleman of the Bedchamber*, to Lord Lyttelton, who, in his 'Dialogues of the Dead,' had called him an exile."—WALPOLE *to* MANN, March 3, 1761.

[2] "Voltaire, while in England, was entertained by Pope at his table, when he talked with so much grossness that Mrs. Pope was driven from the room. Pope discovered, by a trick, that he was a spy for the court, and never considered him a man worthy of confidence."—JOHNSON, *Life of Pope.*

[3] "Voltaire, like the French in general, showed the greatest complaisance out-

upon Milton's "Paradise Lost." He displayed, as the story goes, all his critical skill in condemning the allegorical personages which Milton has introduced into his poem, and this with the utmost vivacity and unbounded freedom of speech. Upon which Young, regarding him with a fixed eye, spoke the following epigram:

> "So very witty, wicked, and so thin;
> Fit emblem sure of Milton, Death, and Sin." [1]

However, I only mention this to show what trifles are generally ascribed to men when once grown famous. The wretchedness of the epigram will readily convince those who have any pretensions to taste that Dr. Young could never have been the author; probably some blockhead made the verses first, and the story after.[2]

Among the number of those who either patronized him, or enrolled themselves in the list of his friends, was the Duchess of Marlborough. She found infinite pleasure in the agreeable vivacity of his conversation, but mistook his levity for want of principle. Such a man seemed to her the properest person to digest the memoirs of her life; which, even so early as this, she had an inclination of publishing. She proposed the task, accordingly, to him, and he readily undertook to oblige her. But when she showed him her materials, and began to dictate the use she would have them turned to, Voltaire appeared no longer the good-natured, complying creature which she took him for. He found some characters were to be blackened without just grounds, some of her actions to be vindicated that deserved censure, and a mis-

wardly, and had the greatest contempt for us inwardly. He consulted Dr. Young about his Essay in English, and begged him to correct any gross faults he might find in it. The Doctor set very honestly to work, marked the passages most liable to censure; and when he went to explain himself about them, Voltaire could not avoid bursting out a-laughing in his face."—SPENCE, by Singer, p. 374, on the authority of Dr. Young.

[1] Or as it is printed in the "Life of Young," written for Dr. Johnson:

> "You are so witty, profligate, and thin,
> At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin."

[2] "It was on the occasion of Voltaire's criticism on the episode of Death and Sin that Dr. Young spoke that couplet to him:

> 'Thou'rt so ingenious, profligate, and thin,
> That thou thyself art Milton's Death and Sin.'

Voltaire's objection to that fine episode was, that Death and Sin were nonexistent."—SPENCE, by Singer, p. 375.

tress to be exposed to whom she owed infinite obligations. Our poet accordingly remonstrated with her grace, and seemed to intimate the inconsistency of such a conduct with gratitude and justice; he gravely assured her that the publication of secrets which were communicated under the seal of friendship would give the world no high opinion of her morals. He was thus continuing his discourse, when the Duchess, quite in a passion, snatched the papers out of his hands: "I thought," said she, "the man had sense; but I find him at bottom either a fool or a philosopher."

He was but two years in England, yet it is somewhat strange to think how much he either wrote, published, or studied during so short a residence. He gave amongst his friends a criticism he had written in English upon Milton, which he concludes in this manner: "It requires reach of thought to discover the defects of Milton; his excellences lie obvious to every capacity; he atones for a few faults by a thousand beauties; and, like Satan, the hero of his own poem, even when fallen he wears the appearance of majesty."

But the performance upon which he founds his most lasting share of fame was published in this country. The French language had hitherto been deemed unsusceptible of the true epic dignity. Several unsuccessful attempts by Ronsard, Chapelaine, and others, had made critics despair of ever seeing an heroic poem in the language; and some writers had laid it down as actually impossible. Voltaire, who seemed to be born to encounter difficulty, undertook the task, and that at an age when pleasure is apt to silence the voice of ambition. This poem, the "Henriade," was first published under the title of the "League." He began it in the Bastile, enlarged and corrected it for several years afterwards, and had some thoughts of publishing it in France. Upon showing the manuscript to Fontenelle, his friend, he was by him advised to retrench several passages which seemed to be written with too warm a spirit of liberty, under such a government as theirs; but Voltaire, who considered those very passages as the greatest beauties of his work, was resolved the poem should make its first appearance in a country in love with liberty, and ready to praise every performance written in its defence. With this view he brought the work over with him to England, and offered it in the usual manner to a bookseller, in order to be published. The bookseller, as some pretend, either unacquainted with its value or willing to impose upon a stranger, offered him but a trifle for the manuscript, and would print only such a number as he thought proper. These were terms with

which the author chose not to comply; and, considering the number and the rank of his friends, he was resolved to publish it by subscription. A subscription was opened accordingly, and quickly filled with persons of the first rank and eminence, not only of Great Britain, but of Europe in general. A condition of the proposals was, that the subscribers should have their books a month before it was published in the ordinary manner in London.

In this situation were things, when an unforeseen accident called our poet out of the kingdom, being sent for by M. d'Argenson, Prime-minister of France, in order to become the King's historiographer. Voltaire was therefore obliged to return with reluctance home, leaving to his bookseller the care of satisfying the subscribers. Voltaire, however, affirms that the bookseller, considering that there was no great difference between reading a book a month sooner or later, was resolved to indulge the curiosity of the public first, and gratify the subscribers after; as by this means the profits accruing from the sale, which were to be his own, would be greatly increased. The reader may judge for himself whether this is not the true reason why the subscribers to the "Henriade" had not the work till a month after it was first published in London; and not against the author but his bookseller should their censure be levelled. It cannot be conceived what a number of enemies this raised Voltaire; for all imputed to him that meanness of which those who are of his acquaintance know him to be utterly incapable. A neglect, indeed, he was guilty of, in leaving no friend to see justice done to the public. This may be said of our poet's character in general, that he has frequently been guilty of indiscretions, but never of meanness. A mind employed in the contemplation of great virtues is sometimes guilty of trifling absurdities—

"—— quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura."—Hor.

An honest man may sometimes unite with such as will render his actions suspected; but then it is the fault of good minds to be too credulous, and instead of condemning such a man of falsehood, we should pity his good-nature.

The poem was dedicated to Queen Caroline, for which she made the author a present of her picture, valued at two hundred guineas. The dedication breathes a spirit which at once characterizes the poet, the philosopher, and the man of virtue; and some prefer it even to any part of the succeeding performance. It must be confessed the

"Henriade" has its faults: its incidents in general do not sufficiently interest or surprise; it seldom rises to the sublime, though it never falls into flatness. The moral reflections return too frequently, and retard that speed which is one of the greatest beauties of narration. However, with all its faults, the French regard it as the first epic poem in their language, and though (national partiality laid aside) it sinks infinitely below Milton, yet it will be sufficient to gain the author immortality.

Upon his return home he found his fame greatly increased, the Prime-minister of France himself being proud of ranking among the number of his friends. Scarcely a country of Europe from which the learned did not send him their acknowledgments for the pleasure and instruction they had received from his last performance. The King of France used frequently to entreat the pleasure of his company; for he found in him one who had learned from the English to treat monarchs with an honest freedom, and who disdained those mean submissions which at once render kings proud and miserable. Had our poet been inclined to make a large fortune, had he been that avaricious wretch which his enemies have often represented him, he had now an opportunity of gratifying his most sanguine expectations. But he was born free, and had imbibed the privileges of a man and a philosopher. Ambition could not bribe him to forfeit his birthright, and he disdained becoming great at the expense of his liberty. The King would frequently desire his company, but Voltaire came only when he thought proper. Sometimes he would beg of his majesty to excuse his attendance, as he had made an appointment elsewhere; sometimes he would return for answer that he was detained by Madame du Chatelet, and could not possibly come. These excuses the King generally received with the utmost good-humor, and never, upon Voltaire's appearance, resented his former refusal. The truth is, the King loved a companion who had wit enough to amuse him, and good-sense enough not to turn his familiarity into abuse.

But about this time there was a still greater honor done to our poet's merit than he had ever yet received, though kings and princes had already conspired to raise his reputation. The house of Brandenburgh had been for some ages acquiring strength and power in Germany. At this time Frederick II. sat upon the throne of Prussia—a monarch born to be the father and yet the terror of his subjects. All his family, his children as well as his domestics, feared and sometimes felt the weight of his displeasure. He was arbitrary in all his com-

mands; and though his desires were frequently bent upon trifles, none in all his court were found who were hardy enough to remonstrate, or had courage to lend him advice when he most wanted it. There was, however, found at last one resolved to offer his remonstrances, though the consequence threatened unremitting displeasure. The Prince Royal, his son, took this liberty, and sometimes showed the King, with the utmost deference, the dangers attending an excess of avarice, and the whimsical absurdity of employing soldiers only for show. This conduct was immediately construed into disobedience; and this brought on such severity of treatment that the Prince was resolved to leave the kingdom and fly for protection to England. It is not the business of this memoir to mention the accidents by which his intentions were frustrated, nor the miseries he essayed in seeing his dearest friends, who were partners of his design, sacrificed on the scaffold; be it sufficient to say that he was now put into close confinement, in which he felt many years of severe captivity. The school of misery is the school of wisdom. Instead of nursing up his mind in indolence, or indulging sorrow, he refined his understanding by books, at first his only companions, and when indulged in greater liberties, the learned, of whom he was fond, had leave to visit him. Thus did this youth of genius spend his time among philosophers and men of virtue, and learn from them the hardest of all arts—the art of being a king. The "Henriade" of Voltaire reached our philosophic Prince in his retreat. He read it, was charmed with the poem, and wished for the acquaintance of the poet. He had himself already written some metaphysical essays in answer to Horrebow. He had also diverted himself at intervals by translating some of the Latin poets, or composing somewhat of his own; but he wanted a friend whose judgment might be relied on—one to whom he could communicate his productions, and who had a capacity to amend them. He had already several learned men with him in his retreat, but they were rather philosophers than poets; he wanted a companion who could unite both the characters, who had solidity to instruct when he designed to be serious, and vivacity to unbend his mind when fatigued with study. Voltaire seemed to him adapted to both those purposes; he therefore resolved to give him an invitation to Prussia.

But the distinctions paid our poet by majesty, and the endearments he received from friendship, only served, by increasing envy, to increase the number of his enemies. Some years before this an ecclesiastic, the Abbé des Fontaines, one who had some little reputation for

poetry, was accused of a heinous crime, and expelled his convent upon that suspicion. Poor and infamous, he knew not where to apply for succor; from his own order he received only reproaches, and the public paid his merits but small regard. Voltaire saw him an object of compassion; he imagined it doubly his duty to relieve him, since he was in distress and a poet. He therefore procured his indigent brother all the conveniences of life, made use of his interest to clear his reputation, and at last effectually re-established a character which he imagined had been unjustly injured. There are some obligations too great for gratitude. That is a debt the poor pay as an equivalent for favors; but when those become so great that no gratitude can equal, the mind becomes bankrupt, and pays with envy instead of acknowledgments. Such was the case of the Abbé des Fontaines; and a man whom small obligations might have eternally bound, became an enemy by being too much obliged. I shall not pretend to say that Des Fontaines was the only person in fault upon this occasion. Voltaire might have required a deference which transcended the bounds of friendship. Des Fontaines could only regard him as an equal, and our poet wanted to be treated as a superior.

Their friendship, as was naturally to be expected, was soon converted into hatred. They mutually taxed each other with pride and ingratitude, and at last pleaded before the bar of the public, where each was more solicitous of injuring his opponent than of defending himself. Des Fontaines wrote a pamphlet, entitled the "Voltairomania," containing all the little levities of Voltaire's youth, some true, others taken up on groundless report; he added also the faults of his father and his family to increase the sum, and exhausted all that malice could suggest upon the occasion. But Des Fontaines did not maintain the unequal combat alone. Rousseau, a man of true genius, whose Odes are perhaps as beautiful as those of Horace, entered into the confederacy, and Ramsay served to complete the triumvirate.

In the republic of letters, he who arrogates superiority is sure to be disappointed: in vain he has the voice of the people—that is lost in idle murmurs; but the Press is against him, and that speaks in characters far more lasting. Voltaire found himself attacked in the part he held most dear—his moral character. He appears to have been sensibly wounded by his antagonists; for there is scarcely a subsequent publication of his which does not make mention of the falsehood or the ingratitude of his enemies. The fame he had acquired by the tragedy of "Alzira" served to increase their fury, and they only

waited an opportunity to renew the assault. That opportunity was soon given. In the year 1736 he published a little poem, intituled "La Défense du Mondain," or an apology for luxury. In this he endeavors to prove that luxuries are rather serviceable than detrimental to an opulent people. This his enemies eagerly caught up. Des Fontaines had interest with one of his brethren, who had an influence on Cardinal Fleury. The piece was represented to this weak minister as a libel containing many shocking impieties, and the author as deserving the severest punishment. Voltaire had scarcely time to make his defence; he was banished France, and thus at last compelled to yield to the vindictive persecution of Des Fontaines, his inveterate enemy. The Prince of Prussia, upon hearing of our poet's situation, repeated his offers of friendship, and invited him into his kingdom. Voltaire, however, declined the invitation, and chose to reside at the château of Madame du Chatelet, at Cirey, where he employed his time in instructing her in the polite arts. It was here, and for her use, that he drew up that system of Universal History, which, whatever may be its fidelity, is certainly a fine specimen of the solidity of his judgment, and his intimate acquaintance with human nature.

The banishment of M. Voltaire at this time was but short. His friends were active in defending his innocence, and laid his case before the King in such convincing lights that he was pleased to recall him from exile and restore him to favor. His good-fortune, however, was not of long continuance, and only previous to a new disaster. Among the number of favorites at that time at court was Madame de Pompadour, a lady of as much beauty as ever graced a court, but of as indifferent morals as ever disgraced her sex. She had art enough to gain an entire ascendant over the King, and ambition to convert her power to self-interest. While she and her relations sold places and disposed of employments, the nation became almost bankrupt. Wretches raised without merit from obscurity place all their ambition in wealth and magnificence. Such were her relations, sacrificing every public consideration to money, and even without a blush avowing their rapacity. I have before mentioned that Voltaire had been constituted historiographer to the King. This post had been usually considered as the reward of flattery and not of truth, and was generally bestowed accordingly. Our poet, however, who despised his predecessors for being no better than first flatterers of state, was resolved to show his integrity, though at the expense of his happiness. He intimated with the utmost humility to his majesty that he feared

he could not give posterity those favorable ideas of Louis XV. which he had done of his predecessor; that a mind filled with love could leave no room for that paternal affection which a king owed his people, and he concluded by praising Madame de Pompadour's beauty, but at the same time insinuating her artifice. This was enough to banish him from court; a disgrace which gave him not the least concern, as he ever preferred the tranquillity of retirement to the glare of pageantry; or perhaps it might be his peculiar temper to dislike all acquaintance with those who presumed to be his superiors.

Among his friends in Paris he led the life of a man and a philosopher, and professed himself the protector of indigent merit. Every youth whose genius led to poetry found in him an encourager; if poor a supporter, and if rich a friend. He despised the court, and all the honors it could bestow; he laughed at Racine, who was slave enough to die at the frown of a tyrant; vindicated the cause of liberty in a land of slaves; and, by his single example, gave a new mode of thinking to the wits of Paris. However, though he despised the company of courtiers, they did not think proper to overlook him: some sought his conversation with the utmost assiduity, and others pretended to regard him as a dangerous member of the state.

It has been already observed that Madame de Pompadour was by no means in his esteem. This dislike he was imprudent enough to publish in a short satire, in which the King is represented as losing the complaints of the kingdom in her society, and preferring the allurements of a mistress to the voice of virtue and fame. Nothing spreads sooner than scandal or satire; this little performance was quickly read at court, and the King was soon apprised of its author. The monarch, weak, indolent, and voluptuous, could not brook any attempt to control his pleasures. He testified the severest displeasure against the poet, but did not think proper to banish him in direct terms, as he had been long the favorite of the public. It was resolved to send him a private hint that it would be satisfactory if he would quit the kingdom. Cardinal Fleury accordingly acquainted Voltaire with the King's pleasure, and our poet, contrary to his expectations, refused to go unless his banishment was made public. This was a refusal which quite disconcerted his enemies; however, they were determined to accomplish that by force which he had refused to solicitation. An unexpected accident effected what all their intrigues could not do. In 1749 his friend and pupil, Madame du Chatelet, died. For her conversation he had formerly withstood all

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the invitations of the King of Prussia; in her conversation he found a solace against all the calumnies of the envious and the insults of the powerful. When she was gone, those ties which held him to his country were broken, and he considered himself, in every sense of the word, a citizen of the world. He determined to accept the invitation, and went to acquaint the Cardinal Fleury with his intentions. The Cardinal gave him permission to quit France; and Voltaire prepared, in the year 1750, to set out for Prussia, to grace the court of its philosophic monarch.

Frederick II., who had only been Prince of Prussia when the correspondence between him and Voltaire commenced, had been for some time raised to the throne. There was much expected from him by his subjects while a prince; but when he came to be invested with regal power he outdid all their expectations. He had been forced to marry, against his inclinations, a princess of merit and beauty; however, while his father lived he refused either to cohabit with her or even to see her. It was generally supposed that he who had behaved in such a manner while under paternal constraint would aggravate the lady's misfortunes when he came to the throne. But it was quite otherwise; the day he was crowned she also shared his honors; and though he had not seen her for some years, his treatment of her was now changed into the most assiduous complaisance. Those who had been his favorites in imprisonment expected to enjoy their monarch's bounty without rivals; however, in this they were disappointed. He knew that the desires of a courtier are an abyss that can never be filled up; and therefore, instead of lucrative rewards, he recompensed their adherence to his person by honors. In short, he proved himself in every respect the father of his people: he reformed the laws, encouraged commerce, and invited into his dominions the arts and sciences. These he endeavored to promote both from interest and inclination: his mornings were dedicated to study, part of the day to the review of his troops, and his evenings to society. In those hours of vacant hilarity he always threw aside the King. The persons who made at this time the most shining figure at his court, either for wit or learning, were the Marquis d'Argens, Maupertuis, the Baron Polnitz, and Wolfius.

The Marquis d'Argens was graceful in person, regularly featured, and had an extreme vivacity in his eye. I mention these trifling particulars only because gallantry constituted the leading part of his character, and for this he was happily formed by nature. He always en-

deavored to unite in himself the man of pleasure and the philosopher, and only by this means called in the assistance of sentiment to refine his enjoyments; in other words, all his philosophy consisted in epicurism. He was formed for society, spoke infinitely better than he wrote, and wrote infinitely better than he lived. A man of pleasure often leads the most miserable life that can be conceived. Such was his case: he considered every abatement in his enjoyments as insupportable; passed his day between rapture and disappointment, between the extremes of agony and bliss; and often felt a pang as poignant, for want of appetite, as the wretch who wants a meal. In these intervals of spleen he usually kept his bed, and only rose to some varied mode of enjoyment.

The King was delighted with this Frenchman's wit, and pleased with his conversation, but was too wise to give him any other place at court than that of superintendent of the pleasures. He was empowered to invite singers and dancers from abroad, to be master of the ceremonies on all court entertainments, and on those occasions to give laws to the King himself; who never chose to be distinguished from the rest of his subjects when in pursuit of pleasure.

Maupertuis was a man of a very different disposition. He had led in youth a life of academic severity, and practised and praised temperance. He was possessed of some genius, but more industry; had read and digested a great deal, and was one of that cast of characters which are content that there should be subordination in the literary world. He was perfectly acquainted with mathematics, and had read some poetry: from the one his writings have borrowed grace; from the other, solidity. However, they all want that characteristic of true genius, originality; and while the reader can observe in them nothing to be censured, they have little that can be the subject of praise. What Maupertuis wanted in wit he made up by prudence. This is a happy succedaneum to genius, and few who are possessed of the one in a very great degree are found to enjoy the other. No levities ever carried him beyond the bounds of decency; no speech of his ever betrayed the least dislike of the King's conduct or his measures; hence he was regarded at first as a harmless, good-natured man, and this by degrees grew into esteem; so that he had the good-sense to make himself at last the principal favorite.

Baron Polnitz was formed in the school of adversity. He had been in his youth the sport of fortune; he travelled Europe without money, and all the friends he made were owing to his address. The reader

will readily conceive that he was now and then obliged to act the *chevalier d'industrie.* It must be owned his integrity in those juvenile adventures has more than once been called in question. But, as a companion, with the exception of Voltaire, perhaps none of his contemporaries could exceed him. Though in his writings he appears a servile encomiast, in conversation he always mixed something of the misanthropist, which gave an air of shrewdness to his observations, and a strain of singularity to his manner. He had learned to read mankind, not by precept but experience; and as the needy generally see the worst side of those they converse with, he regarded human nature in the most disadvantageous points of view.

Wolfe had long been a professor in the University of Halle, in Saxony; but, indulging a metaphysical turn of thinking, he happened to differ from the modes of speculation at that time established in the schools, for which he was expelled the university. Distress alone was a sufficient recommendation to the King of Prussia's protection; he came over to the Court of Berlin, and was graciously received. Whatever opinion his Prussian Majesty might have had of this professor in his youth, he soon altered his sentiments, and regarded him rather as a learned visionary than a man of wisdom. The truth is, his performances are little more than trifling refinements on the opinions of Leibnitz; who, being very erroneous himself, cannot be expected to have bequeathed precision to his followers.

From the joint efforts of these men, and of some others too tedious to mention, the King was resolved to establish a society for the promotion of science and the belles-lettres. The studies of the academy were divided into four different departments, each, however, serving to illustrate or advance the other. The first, for metaphysics; the second, for mathematics and experimental philosophy; the third, for the languages and belles-lettres; and the fourth, for the study and propagation of religion. Maupertuis was chosen president, and the King himself became a member, and gave in his papers in turn.

Such was a picture of the Court of Berlin at the time Voltaire accepted his Majesty's invitation. When the King was apprised of his arrival in his dominions he went to meet him, attended only by one domestic, some miles out of town, and gave him the most cordial reception. He found Voltaire even more than his hopes or his works had described him. An easy fluency of animated observation generally composed his conversation; he had for some time thrown aside the man of wit, for the more substantial character of the man of

wisdom; he had refined by study all that paradox of which he was once so fond; he assumed neither the character of a misanthrope, like Polnitz, nor of an undistinguishing admirer of the human species, like D'Argens. The King perceived he was possessed of more historical learning than Maupertuis, and more sprightly sallies of imagination than himself, even in his gayest moments. But, while I thus describe Voltaire's superiority, his faults must not be concealed. He was perfectly conscious of his own excellence, and demanded a deference from his brother poets which they did not choose to indulge. This at first raised some jealousies, and the King perceived them; but such was his address, so nicely did he divide his favors and his marks of esteem among these rival wits, that each thought himself the favorite, and all contributed to render the Court of Berlin the most polite in Europe.

But, whatever favors the King bestowed on others, Voltaire enjoyed the strongest marks of his friendship and esteem. To him he communicated his writings, desired his advice with regard to his future designs, and made him a partner in the secrets of his government. He was offered the most honorable and lucrative employments; but these he refused, alleging that it was not riches but friendship that he sought from his connections with kings, and that he came not to impoverish the Court, but to improve it. When he had rested some days after the fatigues of his journey, he thought it his duty to write to his old friend, Cardinal Fleury, and at the same time sent him a performance ascribed to the King of Prussia, entitled "Anti-Machiavel." The letter and the book the Cardinal received with the most extreme satisfaction, and returned Voltaire his acknowledgments in a well-written epistle, in which he informed him of the pleasure he found in his present; adding that if the author of this fine performance was not a king, at least he deserved to be one; and that if such a man had been born in the humblest station, his merits would have raised him to the greatest. This letter Voltaire communicated to Frederick, and it was perhaps one cause of the alliance which soon succeeded between the Courts of France and Prussia. The greatest events often rise from the slightest causes. * * * * [1]

[1] Voltaire died in Paris, 30th of May, 1778, aged 85.

THE LIFE

OF

RICHARD NASH, Esq.,

LATE MASTER OF THE CEREMONIES AT BATH.

EXTRACTED PRINCIPALLY

FROM

HIS ORIGINAL PAPERS.

—— Non ego paucis
Offendar maculis.—Hor.

THE SECOND EDITION.

London:
Printed for J. Newbery, in St. Paul's Churchyard;
W. Frederick, at Bath; and
G. Faulkener, in Dublin.
1762.
[8vo.]

This, the best of Goldsmith's Biographies, was published the year after Nash's death. It was at once popular, and went through two editions in the same year in which it was published.

To the second edition (it never reached a third) Goldsmith made many important additions. Yet, strange to say, none of these have been attended to by the editors of his Works. The text of *this* reprint is that of the second edition, compared with the first. The text of previous editions has been that of a mutilated first impression.

For this admirable piece of biography (the "Life of Nash" could not have been in better hands) Goldsmith received "in full for the copy" fourteen guineas, as appears by his receipt to Newbery for that amount, now, by Mr. Murray's kindness, in my possession.

TO

THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR,

RECORDER, ALDERMEN,

AND

COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BATH,

This Volume

IS HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THEIR MOST OBEDIENT, HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.[1]

We have the permission of George Scott, Esq. (who kindly undertook to settle the affairs of Mr. Nash for the benefit of his family and creditors), to assure the public that all the papers found in the custody of Mr. Nash which anyways respected his life, and were thought interesting to the public, were communicated to the Editor of this volume; so that the reader will at least have the satisfaction of perusing an account that is genuine, and not the work of imagination, as biographical writings too frequently are.

[1] To the second edition.



PREFACE.

THE following Memoir is neither calculated to inflame the reader's passions with descriptions of gallantry, nor to gratify his malevolence with details of scandal. The amours of coxcombs and the pursuits of debauchees are as destitute of novelty to attract us as they are of variety to entertain; they still present us but the same picture—a picture we have seen a thousand times repeated. The life of Richard Nash is incapable of supplying any entertainment of this nature to a prurient curiosity. Though it was passed in the very midst of debauchery, he practised but few of those vices he was often obliged to assent to. Though he lived where gallantry was the capital pursuit, he was never known to favor it by his example, and what authority he had was set to oppose it. Instead, therefore, of a romantic history filled with warm pictures and fanciful adventures, the reader of the following account must rest satisfied with a genuine and candid recital compiled from the papers he left behind, and others equally authentic; a recital neither written with a spirit of satire nor panegyric, and with scarcely any other art than that of arranging the materials in their natural order.

But though little art has been used, it is hoped that some entertainment may be collected from the life of a person so much talked of, and yet so little known, as Mr. Nash. The history of a man who for more than fifty years presided over the pleasures of a polite kingdom, and whose life, though without anything to surprise, was ever marked with singularity, deserves the attention of the present age; the pains he took in pursuing pleasure, and the solemnity he assumed in adjusting trifles, may one day claim the smile of posterity. At least such a history is well calculated to supply a vacant hour with innocent amusement, however it may fail to open the heart or improve the understanding.

Yet his life, how trifling soever it may appear to the inattentive, was not without its real advantages to the public. He was the first

who diffused a desire of society and an easiness of address among a whole people, who were formerly censured by foreigners for a reservedness of behavior and an awkward timidity in their first approaches. He first taught a familiar intercourse among strangers at Bath and Tunbridge, which still subsists among them. That ease and open access first acquired there our gentry brought back to the metropolis, and thus the whole kingdom by degrees became more refined by lessons originally derived from him.

Had it been my design to have made this history more pleasing at the expense of truth, it had been easily performed; but I chose to describe the man as he was, not such as imagination could have helped in completing his picture: he will be found to have been a weak man, governing weaker subjects, and may be considered as resembling a monarch of Cappadocia, whom Cicero somewhere calls "the little king of a little people."

But, while I have been careful in describing the monarch, his dominions have claimed no small share of my attention. I have given an exact account of the rise, regulation, and nature of the amusements of the city of Bath; how far Nash contributed to establish and refine them, and what pleasure a stranger may expect there upon his arrival. Such anecdotes as are at once true and worth preserving are produced in their order, and some stories are added which, though commonly known, more necessarily belong to this history than to the places from whence they have been extracted. But it is needless to point out the pains that have been taken, or the entertainment that may be expected from the perusal of this performance. It is but an indifferent way to gain the reader's esteem to be my own panegyrist; nor is this preface so much designed to lead him to beauties, as to demand pardon for defects.

THE

LIFE OF RICHARD NASH, ESQ.

History owes its excellence more to the writer's manner than to the materials of which it is composed. The intrigues of courts, or the devastation of armies, are regarded by the remote spectator with as little attention as the squabbles of a village, or the fate of a malefactor, that fall under his own observation. The great and the little, as they have the same senses and the same affections, generally present the same picture to the hand of the draughtsman; and whether the hero or the clown be the subject of the memoir, it is only man that appears with all his native minuteness about him; for nothing very great was ever yet formed from the little materials of humanity.

Thus no one can properly be said to write history but he who understands the human heart, and its whole train of affections and follies. Those affections and follies are properly the materials he has to work upon. The relations of great events may surprise, indeed; they may be calculated to instruct those very few who govern the million beneath; but the generality of mankind find the most real improvement from relations which are levelled to the general surface of life, which tell—not how men learned to conquer, but how they endeavored to live—not how they gained the shout of the admiring crowd, but how they acquired the esteem of their friends and acquaintance.

Every man's own life would perhaps furnish the most pleasing materials for history, if he only had candor enough to be sincere, and skill enough to select such parts as, once making him more prudent, might serve to render his readers more cautious. There are few who do not prefer a page of Montaigne or Colley Cibber, who candidly tell us what they thought of the world and the world thought of them, to the more stately memoirs and transactions of Europe, where we see kings pretending to immortality, that are now almost forgotten, and statesmen planning frivolous negotiations, that scarcely outlive the signing.

It were to be wished that ministers and kings were left to write their own histories: they are truly useful to few but themselves; but for men who are contented with more humble stations, I fancy such truths only are serviceable as may conduct them safely through life. That knowledge which we can turn to our real benefit should be most eagerly pursued. Treasures which we cannot use but little increase the happiness or even the pride of the possessor.

I profess to write the history of a man placed in the middle ranks of life; of one whose vices and virtues were open to the eye of the most undiscerning spectator; who was placed in public view without power to repress censure or command adulation; who had too much merit not to become remarkable, yet too much folly to arrive at greatness. I attempt the character of one who was just such a man as probably you or I may be; but with this difference, that he never performed an action which the world did not know, or ever formed a wish which he did not take pains to divulge. In short, I have chosen to write the life of the noted Mr. Nash, as it will be the delineation of a mind without disguise, of a man ever assiduous without industry, and pleasing to his superiors without any superiority of genius or understanding.

Yet, if there be any who think the subject of too little importance to command attention, and who would rather gaze at the actions of the great than be directed in guiding their own, I have one undeniable claim to their attention. Mr. Nash was himself a king. In this particular perhaps no biographer has been so happy as I. They who are for a delineation of men and manners may find some satisfaction that way, and those who delight in adventures of kings and queens may, perhaps, find their hopes satisfied in another.

It is a matter of very little importance who were the parents, or what was the education, of a man who owed so little of his advancement to either. He seldom boasted of family or learning, and his father's name and circumstances were so little known, that Dr. Cheyne used frequently to say that Nash had no father. The Duchess of Marlborough, one day rallying him in public company upon the obscurity of his birth, compared him to Gil Blas, who was ashamed of his father. "No, madam," replied Nash, "I seldom mention my father in company; not because I have any reason to be ashamed of him, but because he has some reason to be ashamed of me."

However, though such anecdotes be immaterial, to go on in the usual course of history, it may be proper to observe that RICHARD

NASH, Esq., the subject of this memoir, was born in the town of Swansea, in Glamorganshire, on the 18th of October, in the year 1674.[1] His father was a gentleman, whose principal income arose from a partnership in a glass-house; his mother was niece to Colonel Poyer, who was killed by Oliver Cromwell for defending Pembroke Castle against the rebels. He was educated under Mr. Maddocks at Carmarthen School, and from thence sent to Jesus College, Oxford, in order to prepare him for the study of the law. His father had strained his little income to give his son such an education; but, from the boy's natural vivacity, he hoped a recompense from his future preferment. In college, however, he soon showed that though much might be expected from his genius, nothing could be hoped from his industry. A mind strongly turned to pleasure always is first seen at the university: there the youth first finds himself freed from the restraint of tutors, and being treated by his friends in some measure as a man, assumes the passions and desires of riper age, and discovers in the boy what are likely to be the affections of his maturity.

The first method Mr. Nash took to distinguish himself at college was not by application to study, but by his assiduity to intrigue. In the neighborhood of every university there are girls who, with some beauty, some coquetry, and little fortune, lie upon the watch for every raw youth more inclined to make love than study. Our hero was quickly caught, and went through all the mazes and adventures of a college intrigue before he was seventeen. He offered marriage; the offer was accepted, but the whole affair coming to the knowledge of his tutors, his happiness, or perhaps his future misery, was prevented, and he was sent home from college with necessary advice to him, and proper instructions to his father.[2]

[1] This account of his birth and parentage is confirmed by the following memorandum, written by Mr. Nash himself, in a book belonging to Mr. Charles Morgan, at the coffee-house in Bath, whence it was transcribed by George Scott, Esq., to whom we are indebted for this and many other anecdotes respecting the life of Mr. Nash:

"My father was a Welsh gentleman, my mother niece to Col. Poyer, who was murdered by Oliver for defending Pembroke. I was born October 18, 1674, in Swansea, Glamorganshire."—GOLDSMITH.

[2] Since the publication of the first edition of this book notice has been taken in some of the newspapers of Mr. Nash's leaving the university without discharging a small debt which he owed to the college where he was placed, and which stands on their books to this day. This is a circumstance which we were informed of before the publication of our former edition; but as our business was to

When a man knows his power over the fair sex he generally commences their admirer for the rest of life. That triumph which he obtains over one only makes him the slave of another, and thus he proceeds, conquering and conquered, to the closing of the scene. The army seemed the most likely profession in which to display this inclination for gallantry; he therefore purchased a pair of colors, commenced a professed admirer of the sex, and dressed to the very edge of his finances. But the life of a soldier is more pleasing to the spectator at a distance than to the person who makes the experiment. Nash soon found that a red coat alone would never succeed, that the company of the fair sex is not to be procured without expense, and that his scanty commission could never procure him the proper reimbursements. He found, too, that the profession of arms required attendance and duty, and often encroached upon those hours he could have wished to dedicate to softer purposes. In short, he soon became disgusted with the life of a soldier, quitted the army, entered his name as a student in the Temple books, and here went to the very summit of second-rate luxury. Though very poor, he was very fine; he spread the little gold he had in the most ostentatious manner, and though the gilding was but thin, he laid it on as far as it would go. They who know the town cannot be unacquainted with such a character as I describe; one who, though he may have dined in private upon a banquet served cold from a cook's shop, shall dress at six for the side-box; one of those whose wants are only known to their laundress and tradesmen, and their fine clothes to half the nobility; who spend more in chair hire than house-keeping, and prefer a bow from a lord to a dinner from a commoner.

In this manner Nash spent some years about town, till at last his genteel appearance, his constant civility, and, still more, his assiduity, gained him the acquaintance of several persons qualified to lead the fashion both by birth and fortune. To gain the friendship of the young nobility little more is requisite than much submission and very

write the life of Mr. Nash, and not to settle his accounts, it seemed to us too immaterial to deserve any particular notice; besides, had we paid any regard to this, we ought also to have taken some notice of another anecdote communicated to us, which was, that when he was sent from college he left behind him a pair of boots, two plays, a tobacco-box, and a fiddle, which had engaged more of his attention than either the public or private lectures. But as this, as well as the other, could afford neither entertainment nor edification, they were purposely omitted.—GOLDSMITH.

fine clothes; dress has a mechanical influence upon the mind, and we naturally are awed into respect and esteem at the elegance of those whom even our reason would teach us to contemn. He seemed early sensible of human weakness in this respect; he brought a person genteelly dressed to every assembly; he always made one of those who are called very good company, and assurance gave him an air of elegance and ease.

When King William was upon the throne Mr. Nash was a member of the Middle Temple. It had been long customary for the Inns of Court to entertain our monarchs upon their accession to the crown, or some such remarkable occasion, with a revel and pageant. In the earlier periods of our history poets were the conductors of these entertainments; plays were exhibited and complimentary verses were then written; but by degrees the pageant alone was continued, Sir John Davis being the last poet that wrote verses upon such an occasion, in the reign of James I.

This ceremony, which has been at length totally discontinued, was last exhibited in honor of King William, and Mr. Nash was chosen to conduct the whole with proper decorum. He was then but a very young man; but we see at how early an age he was thought proper to guide the amusements of his country, and be the *arbiter elegantiarum* of his time; we see how early he gave proofs of that spirit of regularity for which he afterwards became famous, and showed an attention to those little circumstances of which, though the observance be trifling, the neglect has often interrupted men of the greatest abilities in the progress of their fortunes.

In conducting this entertainment Nash had an opportunity of exhibiting all his abilities, and King William was so well satisfied with his performance that he made him an offer of knighthood. This, however, he thought proper to refuse, which in a person of his disposition seems strange. "Please your Majesty," replied he, when the offer was made him, "if you intend to make me a knight, I wish it may be one of your Poor Knights of Windsor, and then I shall have a fortune at least able to support my title." Yet we do not find that the King took the hint of increasing his fortune; perhaps he could not; he had at that time numbers to oblige, and he never cared to give money without important services.

But though Nash acquired no riches by his late office, yet he gained many friends, or, what is more easily obtained, many acquaintances, who often answer the end as well. In the populous city where he re-

sided, to be known was almost synonymous with being in the road to fortune. How many little things do we see, without merit, or without friends, push themselves forward into public notice, and, by self-advertising, attract the attention of the day! The wise despise them, but the public are not all wise. Thus they succeed: rise upon the wing of folly or of fashion, and by their success give a new sanction to effrontery.

But besides his assurance Mr. Nash had in reality some merit and some virtues. He was, if not a brilliant, at least an easy companion. He never forgot good-manners, even in the highest warmth of familiarity, and, as I hinted before, never went in a dirty shirt to disgrace the table of his patron or his friend. These qualifications might make the furniture of his head; but for his heart, that seemed an assemblage of the virtues which display an honest, benevolent mind, with the vices which spring from too much good-nature. He had pity for every creature's distress, but wanted prudence in the application of his benefits. He had generosity for the wretched in the highest degree, at a time when his creditors complained of his justice. He often spoke falsehoods, but never had any of his harmless tales tinctured with malice.

An instance of his humanity is told us in *The Spectator*, though his name is not mentioned. When he was to give in his accounts to the Masters of the Temple, among other articles, he charged, "For making one man happy, £10." Being questioned about the meaning of so strange an item, he frankly declared that, happening to overhear a poor man declare to his wife and a large family of children that £10 would make him happy, he could not avoid trying the experiment. He added that, if they did not choose to acquiesce in his charge, he was ready to refund the money. The Masters, struck with such an uncommon instance of good-nature, publicly thanked him for his benevolence, and desired that the sum might be doubled, as a proof of their satisfaction.[1]

[1] "I remember to have heard a bencher of the Temple tell a story of a tradition in their house, where they had formerly a custom of choosing kings for such a season, and allowing him his expenses at the charge of the society. One of our friends, said my friend, carried his royal inclination a little too far, and there was a committee ordered to look into the management of his treasury. Among other things it appeared that his majesty, walking *incog.* in the Cloister, had overheard a poor man say to another, 'Such a small sum would make me the happiest man in the world.' The king, out of his royal compassion, privately inquired into his

Beau Nash





Another instance of his unaccountable generosity, and I shall proceed. In some transactions with one of his friends Nash was brought in debtor twenty pounds. His friend frequently asked for the money, and was as often denied. He found at last that assiduity was likely to have no effect, and therefore contrived an honorable method of getting back his money without dissolving the friendship that subsisted between them. One day, returning from Nash's chamber with the usual assurance of being paid to-morrow, he went to one of their mutual acquaintance and related the frequent disappointments he had received, and the little hopes he had of being ever paid. "My design," continues he, "is that you should go and try to borrow twenty pounds from Nash, and bring me the money. I am apt to think he will lend to you, though he will not pay me. Perhaps we may extort from his generosity what I have failed to receive from his justice." His friend obeyed, and going to Nash, assured him that unless relieved by his friendship he should certainly be undone; he wanted to borrow twenty pounds, and had tried all his acquaintance without success. Nash, who had but some minutes before refused to pay a just debt, was in raptures at thus giving an instance of his friendship, and instantly lent what was required. Immediately upon the receipt the pretended borrower goes to the real creditor, and gives him the money, who met Mr. Nash the day after. Our hero, upon seeing him, immediately began his usual excuses, that the billiard-room had stripped him; that he was never so damnably out of cash, but that in a few days— "My dear sir, be under no uneasiness," replied the other, "I would not interrupt your tranquillity for the world; you lent twenty pounds yesterday to our friend of the back-stairs, and he lent it to me: give him your receipt, and you shall have mine." "Perdition seize thee!" cried Nash, "thou hast been too many for me. You demanded a debt, he asked a favor: to pay thee would not increase our friendship; but to lend him was procuring a new friend, by conferring a new obligation."

Whether men at the time I am now talking of had more wit than at present, I will not take upon me to determine; but certain it is, they took more pains to show what they had. In that age a fellow of high humor would drink no wine but what was strained through

character; and finding him a proper object of charity, sent him the money. When the committee read the report, the house passed his accounts with a *plaudite* without farther examination, upon the recital of this article in them: 'For making a man happy, £10.'"—STEELE, *The Spectator*, No. 248.

his mistress's smock.[1] He would eat a pair of her shoes tossed up in a fricassee; he would swallow tallow-candles instead of toasted cheese, and even run naked about town, as it was then said, to divert the ladies. In short, that was the age of such kind of wit as is the most distant of all others from wisdom.

Mr. Nash, as he sometimes played tricks with others, upon certain occasions received very severe retaliations. Being at York, and having lost all his money, some of his companions agreed to equip him with fifty guineas upon this proviso, that he would stand at the great door of the Minster in a blanket, as the people were coming out of church. To this proposal he readily agreed; but the Dean, passing by, unfortunately knew him. "What!" cried the divine, "Nash in masquerade?" "Only a Yorkshire penance, Mr. Dean, for keeping bad company," said Nash, pointing to his companions.

Some time after this he won a wager of still greater consequence by riding naked through a village upon a cow. This was then thought a harmless frolic; at present it would be looked upon with detestation.

He was once invited by some gentlemen of the navy on board a man-of-war, that had sailing orders for the Mediterranean. This was soon after the affair of the revels, and, being ignorant of any design against him, he took his bottle with freedom. But he soon found, to use the expression then in fashion, that he was absolutely "bitten." The ship sailed away before he was aware of his situation, and he was obliged to make the voyage in the company where he had spent the night.

Many lives are often passed without a single adventure, and I do not know of any in the life of our hero that can be called such except what we are now relating. During this voyage he was in an engagement, in which his particular friend was killed by his side, and he himself wounded in the leg. For the anecdote of his being wounded we are solely to trust to his own veracity; but most of his acquaintance were not much inclined to believe him when he boasted on those occasions. Telling one day of the wound he had received for his country, in one of the public rooms at Bath (Wiltshire's, if I do not forget), a lady of distinction that sat by said it was all false. "I protest, madam," replied he, "it is true; and if I cannot be believed, your

[1] See, in illustration of this, a story told by Wycherley to Pack, as quoted in "Cunningham's Hand-book of London;" art., *Bear at the Bridge Foot.*

ladyship may, if you please, receive further information and feel the ball in my leg."

Nash was now fairly for life entered into a new course of gayety and dissipation, and steady in nothing but in pursuit of variety. He was thirty years old, without fortune, or useful talents to acquire one. He had hitherto only led a life of expedients; he thanked chance alone for his support, and having been long precariously supported, he became, at length, totally a stranger to prudence or precaution. Not to disguise any part of his character, he was now, by profession, a gamester, and went on from day to day, feeling the vicissitudes of rapture and anguish, in proportion to the fluctuations of fortune.

At this time London was the only theatre in England for pleasure or intrigue. A spirit of gaming had been introduced in the licentious age of Charles II., and had by this time thriven surprisingly. Yet all its devastations were confined to London alone. To this great mart of every folly sharpers from every country daily arrived for the winter; but were obliged to leave the kingdom at the approach of summer, in order to open a new campaign at Aix, Spa, or the Hague. Bath, Tunbridge, Scarborough, and other places of the same kind here, were then frequented only by such as really went for relief: the pleasures they afforded were merely rural; the company splenetic, rustic, and vulgar. In this situation of things people of fashion had no agreeable summer retreat from the town, and usually spent that season amidst a solitude of country squires, parsons' wives, and visiting tenants or farmers; they wanted some place where they might have each other's company, and win each other's money, as they had done during the winter in town.

To a person who does not thus calmly trace things to their source nothing will appear more strange than how the healthy could ever consent to follow the sick to those places of spleen, and live with those whose disorders are ever apt to excite a gloom in the spectator. The truth is, the gaming-table was properly the salutary font to which such numbers flocked. Gaming will ever be the pleasure of the rich while men continue to be men; while they fancy more happiness is being possessed of what they want, than they experience pleasure in the fruition of what they have. The wealthy only stake those riches which give no real content, for an expectation of riches in which they hope for satisfaction. By this calculation they cannot lose happiness, as they begin with none; and they hope to gain it, by being possessed of something they have not had already.

Probably upon this principle, and by the arrival of Queen Anne there, for her health, about the year 1703,[1] the city of Bath became in some measure frequented by people of distinction. The company was numerous enough to form a country-dance upon the bowling green; they were amused with a fiddle and hautboy, and diverted with the romantic walks round the city. They usually sauntered in fine weather in the grove, between two rows of sycamore-trees. Several learned physicians, Dr. Jorden and others, had even then praised the salubrity of the wells, and the amusements were put under a master of ceremonies.

Captain Webster was the predecessor of Mr. Nash. This I take to be the same gentleman whom Mr. Lucas describes in his history of the Lives of the Gamesters, by which it appears that Bath, even before the arrival of Nash, was found a proper retreat for men of that profession. This gentleman, in the year 1704, carried the balls to the Town-hall, each man paying half a guinea each ball.

Still, however, the amusements of this place were neither elegant nor conducted with delicacy. General society among people of rank or fortune was by no means established. The nobility still preserved a tincture of Gothic haughtiness, and refused to keep company with the gentry at any of the public entertainments of the place. Smoking in the rooms was permitted; gentlemen and ladies appeared in a disrespectful manner at public entertainments in aprons and boots. With an eagerness common to those whose pleasures come but seldom, they generally continued them too long; and thus they were rendered disgusting by too free an enjoyment. If the company liked each other, they danced till morning; if any person lost at cards, he insisted on continuing the game till luck should turn. The lodgings for visitants were paltry, though expensive; the dining-rooms and other chambers were floored with boards colored brown with soot and small-beer to

[1] "Queen Anne visited Bath in 1702, and was received with every mark of honor and distinction. One hundred young men of the city, uniformly clad and armed, and two hundred of its female inhabitants, dressed after the manner of Amazons, met her Majesty and her train on the borders of Somersetshire, and accompanied them to the western gate of the city. A prodigious inconvenience, however, was occasioned by this distinguished favor to those who visited Bath for the sake of its waters; for such a tribe of idlers crowded to it in the retinue of the Queen, and in consequence of the novelty of her visit, that the articles of life experienced a rise of one hundred per cent., and a guinea a night was paid for many a bed."—WARNER, *History of Bath*, p. 209.

hide the dirt; the walls were covered with unpainted wainscot; the furniture corresponded with the meanness of the architecture; a few oak chairs, a small looking-glass, with a fender and tongs, composed the magnificence of these temporary habitations. The city was in itself mean and contemptible; no elegant buildings, no open streets, nor uniform squares. The pump-house was without any director; the chairmen permitted no gentlemen or ladies to walk home by night without insulting them; and, to add to all this, one of the greatest physicians of his age conceived a design of ruining the city, by writing against the efficacy of the waters. It was from a resentment of some affronts he had received there that he took this resolution; and accordingly published a pamphlet, by which he said "he would cast a toad into the spring."

In this situation of things it was that Nash first came into that city; and hearing the threat of this physician, he humorously assured the people that, if they would give him leave, he would charm away the poison of the Doctor's toad, as they usually charmed the venom of the tarantula, by music. He therefore was immediately empowered to set up the force of a band of music against the poison of the Doctor's reptile. The company very sensibly increased; Nash triumphed, and the sovereignty of the city was decreed to him by every rank of people.

We are now to behold this gentleman as arrived at a new dignity, for which Nature seemed to have formed him; we are to see him directing pleasures which none had better learned to share; placed over rebellious and refractory subjects, that were to be ruled only by the force of his address, and governing such as had been long accustomed to govern others. We see a kingdom beginning with him, and sending off Tunbridge as one of its colonies.

But to talk more simply when we talk, at best, of trifles. None could possibly conceive a person more fit to fill this employment than Nash. He had some wit, as I have said once or twice before; but it was of that sort which is rather happy than permanent. Once a week he might say a good thing; this the little ones about him took care to divulge; or if they happened to forget the joke, he usually remembered to repeat it himself. In a long intercourse with the world he had acquired an impenetrable assurance; and the freedom with which he was received by the great furnished him with vivacity which could be commanded at any time, and which some mistook for wit. His former intercourse among people of fashion in town had let him into

most of the characters of the nobility, and he was acquainted with many of their private intrigues. He understood rank and precedence with the utmost exactness; was fond of show and finery himself, and generally set a pattern of it to others. These were his favorite talents, and he was the favorite of such as had no other.

But, to balance these which some may consider as foibles, he was charitable himself, and generally shamed his betters into a similitude of sentiment, if they were not naturally so before. He was fond of advising those young men who, by youth and too much money, are taught to look upon extravagance as a virtue. He was an enemy to rudeness in others, though in the latter part of his life he did not much seem to encourage a dislike of it by his own example. None talked with more humanity of the foibles of others, when absent, than he, nor kept those secrets with which he was intrusted more inviolably. But, above all (if moralists will allow it among the number of his virtues), though he gamed high, he always played very fairly. These were his qualifications. Some of the nobility regarded him as an inoffensive, useful companion, the size of whose understanding was, in general, level with their own; but their little imitators admired him as a person of fine sense and great good-breeding. Thus people became fond of ranking him in the number of their acquaintance, told over his jests, and Beau Nash at length became the fashionable companion.

His first care, when made Master of the Ceremonies, or King of Bath, as it is called, was to promote a music subscription of one guinea each for a band, which was to consist of six performers, who were to receive a guinea a week each for their trouble. He allowed also two guineas a week for lighting and sweeping the rooms, for which he accounted to the subscribers by receipt.

The pump-house was immediately put under the care of an officer, by the name of the pumper, for which he paid the corporation an annual rent. A row of new houses was begun on the south side of the gravel-walks, before which a handsome pavement was then made for the company to walk on. Not less than seventeen or eighteen hundred pounds was raised this year and in the beginning of 1706, by subscription, and laid out in repairing the roads near the city. The streets began to be better paved, cleaned, and lighted; the licenses of the chairmen were repressed; and, by an act of Parliament procured on this occasion, the invalids who came to drink or bathe were exempted from all manner of toll, as often as they should go out of the city for recreation.

The houses and streets now began to improve, and ornaments were lavished upon them even to profusion. But in the midst of this splendor the company still were obliged to assemble in a booth to drink tea and chocolate, or to game. Mr. Nash undertook to remedy this inconvenience, and by his direction one Thomas Harrison erected a handsome assembly-house for these purposes. A better band of music was also procured, and the former subscription of one guinea was raised to two. Harrison had three guineas a week for the room and candles, and the music two guineas a man. The money Mr. Nash received and accounted for with the utmost exactness and punctuality. To this house were also added gardens for people of rank and fashion to walk in; and the beauty of the suburbs continued to increase, notwithstanding the opposition that was made by the corporation; who at that time looked upon every useful improvement, particularly without the walls, as dangerous to the inhabitants within.

His dominion was now extensive and secure, and he determined to support it with the strictest attention. But, in order to proceed in everything like a king, he was resolved to give his subjects a law, and the following Rules were accordingly put up in the pump-room:

RULES TO BE OBSERVED AT BATH.

1. "That a visit of ceremony at first coming and another at going away, are all that are expected or desired by ladies of quality and fashion—except impertinents.

2. "That ladies coming to the ball appoint a time for their footmen coming to wait on them home, to prevent disturbance and inconvenience to themselves and others.

3. "That gentlemen of fashion never appearing in a morning before the ladies in gowns and caps, shew breeding and respect.

4. "That no person take it ill that any one goes to another's play or breakfast, and not theirs—except captious by nature.

5. "That no gentleman give his ticket for the balls to any but gentlewomen.—N.B. Unless he has none of his acquaintance.

6. "That gentlemen crowding before the ladies at the ball shew ill-manners; and that none do so for the future—except such as respect nobody but themselves.

7. "That no gentleman or lady takes it ill that another dances before them—except such as have no pretence to dance at all.

8. "That the elder ladies and children be content with a second bench at the ball, as being past or not come to perfection.

9. "That the younger ladies take notice how many eyes observe them.—N.B. This does not extend to the Have-at-alls.

10. "That all whisperers of lies and scandal be taken for their authors.

11. "That all repeaters of such lies and scandal be shunned by all company—except such as have been guilty of the same crime.—N.B. Several men of no character, old women and young ones of questioned reputation, are great authors of lies in these places, being of the sect of levellers."

These Laws were written by Mr. Nash himself, and, by the manner in which they are drawn up, he undoubtedly designed them for wit. The reader, however, it is feared, will think them dull.[1] But Nash was not born a writer; for, whatever humor he might have in conversation, he used to call a pen his torpedo: whenever he grasped it, it benumbed all his faculties.[2]

But were we to give laws to a nursery, we should make them childish laws; his statutes, though stupid, were addressed to fine gentlemen and ladies, and were probably received with sympathetic approbation. It is certain they were in general religiously observed by his subjects, and executed by him with impartiality; neither rank nor fortune shielded the refractory from his resentment.

[1] RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN THE LADIES' ASSEMBLY IN DERBY.

1. "No attorney's clerk shall be admitted.

2. "No shopkeeper or any of his or her family shall be admitted, except Mr. Franceys.

3. "No lady shall be allowed to dance in a long white apron.

4. "All young ladies in mantuas shall pay two shillings and sixpence.

5. "No miss in a coat shall dance without leave of the lady of the assembly.

6. "Whoever shall transgress any of these rules shall be turned out of the Assembly-Room.

"Several of the above-mentioned rules having of late been broke through, they are now printed by our order, and signed by us, the present ladies and governors of the assembly.

"ANNE BARNES, BRIDGET BAILY,
"DOROTHY EVERY, R. FITZHERBERT,
"ELIZABETH EYRE, HESTER MUNDAY."

Printed Rules preserved in the Museum at Derby, date *cir.* 1760.

[2] "It has been circulated, I know not on what authenticity, that Dr. Johnson considered Dr. Birch as a dull writer, and said of him: 'Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation; but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand than it becomes a torpedo to him, and benumbs all his faculties.'"—BOSWELL, by Croker, p. 48; ed. 1848.

The balls, by his directions, were to begin at six and to end at eleven. Nor would he suffer them to continue a moment longer, lest invalids might commit irregularities, to counteract the benefit of the waters. Everything was to be performed in proper order. Each ball was to open with a minuet, danced by two persons of the highest distinction present. When the minuet concluded the lady was to return to her seat, and Nash was to bring the gentleman a new partner. This ceremony was to be observed by every succeeding couple; every gentleman being obliged to dance with two ladies till the minuets were over, which generally continued two hours. At eight the country-dances were to begin; ladies of quality, according to their rank, standing up first. About nine o'clock a short interval was allowed for rest, and for the gentlemen to help their partners to tea. That over, the company were to pursue their amusements till the clock struck eleven. Then the master of the ceremonies, entering the ball-room, ordered the music to desist by lifting up his finger. The dances discontinued, and some time allowed for becoming cool, the ladies were handed to their chairs.

Even the royal family themselves had not influence enough to make him deviate from any of these rules. The Princess Amelia once applying to him for one dance more, after he had given the signal to withdraw, he assured her royal highness that the established rules of Bath resembled the laws of Lycurgus, which would admit of no alteration without an utter subversion of all his authority.

He was not less strict with regard to the dresses in which ladies and gentlemen were to appear. He had the strongest aversion to a white apron, and absolutely excluded all who ventured to appear at the assembly dressed in that manner. I have known him on a ball night strip even the Duchess of Q——[1] and throw her apron at one of

[1] "If Queensbury to strip there's no compelling,
'Tis from a handmaid we must take a Helen."—POPE.

Catherine Hyde, daughter of Henry, fourth Earl of Clarendon, and wife of Charles Douglas, Duke of Queensbury, celebrated in her youth by Prior, and in her old age by Horace Walpole, and by both in verse. She is often mentioned in the Letters of Swift and Pope, and in other publications of the day. For promoting subscriptions to the second part of the "Beggar's Opera," when it had been prohibited from being acted, she was forbid the Court. The monument to Gay in Westminster Abbey was erected at the expense of the Duke and Duchess. She walked at the coronation of George III., and, as Walpole assures us, still looked well in her milk-white locks. She died 1777.

the hinder benches among the ladies' women; observing that none but Abigails appeared in white aprons. This from another would be an insult; in him it was considered as a just reprimand, and the good-natured Duchess acquiesced in his censure.

But he found more difficulty in attacking the gentlemen's irregularities; and for some time strove, but in vain, to prohibit the use of swords. Disputes arising from love of play were sometimes attended with fatal effects. To use his own expression, he was resolved to hinder people from doing "what they had no mind to;" but for some time without effect. However, there happened about that time a duel between two gamesters, whose names were Taylor and Clarke, which helped to promote his peaceable intentions. They fought by torch-light in the grove; Taylor was run through the body, but lived seven years after, at which time his wound breaking out afresh, it caused his death. Clarke from that time pretended to be a Quaker, but the orthodox brethren never cordially received him among their number; and he died at London, about eighteen years after, in poverty and contrition. From that time it was thought necessary to forbid the wearing of swords at Bath, as they often tore the ladies' clothes, and frighted them, by sometimes appearing upon trifling occasions. Whenever, therefore, Nash heard of a challenge given or accepted, he instantly had both parties arrested. The gentlemen's boots also made a very desperate stand against him; the country squires were by no means submissive to his usurpations, and probably his authority alone would never have carried him through, had he not re-enforced it with ridicule. He wrote a song upon the occasion, which, for the honor of his poetical talents, the world shall see:

FRONTINELLA'S INVITATION TO THE ASSEMBLY.

"Come, one and all, to Hoyden Hall,
For there's the assembly this night;
None but prude fools,
Mind manners and rules;
We Hoydens do decency slight.
Come, trollops and slatterns,
Cocked hats and white aprons,
This best our modesty suits;
For why should not we
In dress be as free,
As Hogs-Norton squires in boots?"

The keenness, severity, and particularly the good rhymes, of this little *morceau*, which was at that time highly relished by many of the

nobility at Bath, gained him a temporary triumph. But, to push his victories, he got up a puppet-show, in which Punch came in booted and spurred, in the character of a country squire. He was introduced as courting his mistress, and having obtained her consent to comply with his wishes, upon going to bed he is desired to pull off his boots. "My boots!" replies Punch, "why, madam, you may as well bid me pull off my legs. I never go without boots; I never ride, I never dance, without them, and this piece of politeness is quite the thing at Bath. We always dance at our town in boots, and the ladies often move minuets in riding-hoods." Thus he goes on, till his mistress, grown impatient, kicks him off the stage.

From that time few ventured to be seen at the assemblies in Bath in a riding-dress; and whenever any gentleman, through ignorance or haste, appeared in the rooms in boots, Nash would make up to him, and, bowing in an arch manner, would tell him that he had "forgot his horse." Thus he was at last completely victorious.

"Dolisque coacti
Quos neque Tydides nec Larissæus Achilles
Non anni domûere decem."

He began, therefore, to reign without a rival, and like other kings had his mistresses, flatterers, enemies, and calumniators. The amusements of the place, however, wore a very different aspect from what they did formerly. Regularity repressed pride, and that lessened, people of fortune became fit for society. Let the morose and grave censure an attention to forms and ceremonies, and rail at those whose only business it is to regulate them; but, though ceremony is very different from politeness, no country was ever yet polite that was not first ceremonious. The natural gradation of breeding begins in savage disgust, proceeds to indifference, improves into attention, by degrees refines into ceremonious observance; and the trouble of being ceremonious at length produces politeness, elegance, and ease. There is, therefore, some merit in mending society, even in one of the inferior steps of this gradation; and no man was more happy in this respect than Nash. In every nation there are enough who have no other business or care but that of buying pleasure; and he taught them who bid at such an auction the art of procuring what they sought, without diminishing the pleasure of others.

The city of Bath, by such assiduity, soon became the theatre of summer amusements for all people of fashion; and the manner of

spending the day there must amuse any but such as disease or spleen had made uneasy to themselves. The following is a faint picture of the pleasures that scene affords:—Upon a stranger's arrival at Bath he is welcomed by a peal of the Abbey bells, and in the next place by the voice and music of the city waits. For these civilities the ringers have generally a present made them of half a guinea, and the waits of half a crown, or more, in proportion to the person's fortune, generosity, or ostentation. These customs, though disagreeable, are, however, liked, or they would not continue. The greatest incommodity attending them is the disturbance the bells must give the sick. But the pleasure of knowing the name of every family that comes to town recompenses the inconvenience. Invalids are fond of news, and upon the first sound of the bells everybody sends out to inquire for whom they ring.[1]

After the family is thus welcomed to Bath, it is the custom for the master of it to go to the public places, and subscribe two guineas at the assembly-houses towards the balls and music in the Pump-House, for which he is entitled to three tickets every ball night. His next subscription is a crown, half a guinea, or a guinea, according to his rank and quality, for the liberty of walking in the private walks belonging to Simpson's assembly-house; a crown or half a guinea is also given to the booksellers, for which the gentleman is to have what books he pleases to read at his lodgings, and at the coffee-house another subscription is taken for pen, ink, and paper, for such letters as

[1] "No city, dear mother, this city excels
In charming sweet sounds both of fiddles and bells.
I thought, like a fool, that they only would ring
For a wedding, or judge, or the birth of a king;
But I found 'twas for me that the good-natur'd people
Rung so hard, that I thought they would pull down the steeple;
So I took out my purse, as I hate to be shabby,
And paid all the men when they came from the Abbey.
Yet some think it strange they should make such a riot,
In a place where sick folk would be glad to be quiet:
If a broker or statesman, a gamester or peer,
A nat'raliz'd Jew or a bishop comes here;
Or an eminent trader in cheese should retire
Just to think of the bus'ness the state may require,
With horns and with trumpets, with fiddles and drums,
They'll strive to divert him as soon as he comes:
'Tis amazing they find such a number of ways
Of employing his thoughts all the time that he stays!"

ANSTEY, *New Bath Guide*, 1766. (Letter V.)

the subscriber shall write at it during his stay. The ladies, too, may subscribe to the booksellers, and to an house by the Pump-Room, for the advantage of reading the news, and for enjoying each other's conversation.

Things being thus adjusted, the amusements of the day are generally begun by bathing, which is no unpleasing method of passing away an hour or so.

The baths are five in number. On the south-west side of the Abbey church is the King's Bath, which is an oblong square; the walls are full of niches, and at every corner are steps to descend into it: this bath is said to contain four hundred and twenty-seven tons and fifty gallons of water; and, on its rising out of the ground over the springs, it is sometimes too hot to be endured by those who bathe therein. Adjoining to the King's Bath there is another, called the Queen's Bath; this is of a more temperate warmth, as borrowing its water from the other.

In the south-west part of the city are three other baths, viz., the Hot Bath, which is not much inferior in heat to the King's Bath, and contains fifty-three tons two hogsheads and eleven gallons of water; the Cross Bath, which contains fifty-two tons three hogsheads and eleven gallons; and the Leper's Bath, which is not so much frequented as the rest.

The King's Bath (according to the best observations) will fill in about nine hours and a half; the Hot Bath in about eleven hours and a half; and the Cross Bath in about the same time.

The hours for bathing are commonly between six and nine in the morning, and the baths are every morning supplied with fresh water; for when the people have done bathing, the sluices in each bath are pulled up, and the water is carried off by drains into the river Avon.

In the morning the lady is brought in a close chair, dressed in her bathing clothes,[1] to the bath; and, being in the water, the woman

[1] "This morning, dear mother, as soon as 'twas light
I was wak'd by a noise that astonish'd me quite;
For in Tabitha's chamber I heard such a clatter,
I could not conceive what the deuce was the matter;
And, would you believe? I went up and found her
In a blanket, with two lusty fellows around her,
Who both seem'd agoing to carry her off in
A little black box just the size of a coffin! . . .
'And pray,' says I, 'Tabitha, what is your drift,
To be cover'd in flannel instead of a shift?'"

ANSTEY. (Letter VI.)

who attends presents her with a little floating dish like a basin; into which the lady puts a handkerchief, a snuffbox, and a nosegay. She then traverses the bath; if a novice, with a guide; if otherwise, by herself;[1] and, having amused herself thus while she thinks proper, calls for her chair, and returns to her lodgings.

The amusement of bathing is immediately succeeded by a general assembly of people at the Pump-Room; some for pleasure, and some to drink the hot waters. Three glasses, at three different times, is the usual portion for every drinker; and the intervals between every glass[2] are enlivened by the harmony of a small band of music, as well as by the conversation of the gay, the witty, or the forward.

From the Pump-Room the ladies, from time to time, withdraw to a female coffee-house, and from thence return to their lodgings to breakfast. The gentlemen withdraw to their coffee-houses to read the papers, or converse on the news of the day, with a freedom and ease not to be found in the metropolis.

People of fashion make public breakfasts at the assembly-houses, to which they invite their acquaintances, and they sometimes order private concerts; or, when so disposed, attend lectures on the arts and sciences, which are frequently taught there in a pretty, superficial manner, so as not to tease the understanding, while they afford the imagination some amusement. The private concerts are performed in the ball-rooms; the tickets a crown each.

Concert breakfasts at the assembly-house sometimes make also a part of the morning's amusement here, the expenses of which are de-

[1] "And of all the fine sights I have seen, my dear mother,
I never expect to behold such another;
How the ladies did giggle and set up their clacks,
All the while an old woman was rubbing their backs! . . .
It was a glorious sight to behold the fair sex
All wading with gentlemen up to their necks,
And view them so prettily tumble and sprawl
In a great smoking kettle as big as our hall."—ANSTEY. (Letter VI.)

[2] "Ods, bobs! how delighted I was unawares,
With the fiddles I heard in the room above stairs:
For music is wholesome, the doctors all think,
For ladies that bathe, and for ladies that drink;
And that's the opinion of Robin, our driver,
Who whistles his nags while they stand at the river;
They say it is right that for every glass
A tune you should take, that the water may pass."—*Ibid.*

frayed by a subscription among the men. Persons of rank and fortune who can perform are admitted into the orchestra, and find a pleasure in joining with the performers.

Thus we have the tedious morning fairly over. When noon approaches, and church (if any please to go there) is done, some of the company appear upon the parade and other public walks, where they continue to chat and amuse each other till they have formed parties for the play, cards, or dancing for the evening. Another part of the company divert themselves with reading in the booksellers' shops, or are generally seen taking the air and exercise, some on horseback, some in coaches. Some walk in the meadows round the town, winding along the side of the river Avon and the neighboring canal; while others are seen scaling some of those romantic precipices that overhang the city.

When the hour of dinner draws nigh, and the company are returned from their different recreations, the provisions are generally served with the utmost elegance and plenty. Their mutton, butter, fish, and fowl are all allowed to be excellent, and their cookery still exceeds their meat.

After dinner is over, and evening prayers ended, the company meet a second time at the Pump-House. From this they retire to the walks, and from thence go to drink tea at the assembly-houses, and the rest of the evenings are concluded either with balls, plays, or visits. A theatre was erected in the year 1705, by subscription, by people of the highest rank, who permitted their arms to be engraven on the inside of the house, as a public testimony of their liberality toward it. Every Tuesday and Friday evening is concluded with a public ball, the contributions to which are so numerous that the price of each ticket is trifling. Thus Bath yields a continued rotation of diversions, and people of all ways of thinking, even from the libertine to the Methodist, have it in their power to complete the day with employments suited to their inclinations.

In this manner every amusement soon improved under Mr. Nash's administration. The magistrates of the city found that he was necessary and useful, and took every opportunity of paying the same respect to his fictitious royalty that is generally extorted by real power. The same satisfaction a young lady finds upon being singled out at her first appearance, or an applauded poet on the success of his first tragedy, influenced him. All admired him as an extraordinary character, and, some who knew no better, as a very fine gentleman. He

was perfectly happy in their little applause, and affected at length something particular in his dress, behavior, and conversation.

His equipage was sumptuous, and he usually travelled to Tunbridge in a post-chariot and six grays, with outriders, footmen, French-horns, and every other appendage of expensive parade. He always wore a white hat; and, to apologize for this singularity, said he did it purely to secure it from being stolen; his dress was tawdry, though not perfectly genteel; he might be considered as a beau of several generations, and in his appearance he, in some measure, mixed the fashions of the last age with those of the present. He perfectly understood elegant expense, and generally passed his time in the very best company, if persons of the first distinction deserve that title.

But I hear the reader now demand what finances were to support all this finery, or where the treasures that gave him such frequent opportunities of displaying his benevolence or his vanity? To answer this we must now enter upon another part of his character—his talents as a gamester; for by gaming alone, at that period of which I speak, he kept up so very genteel an appearance. When he first figured at Bath there were few laws against this destructive amusement. The gaming-table was the constant resource of despair and indigence, and frequent ruin of opulent fortunes. Wherever people of fashion came, needy adventurers were generally found in waiting. With such Bath swarmed; and among this class Mr. Nash was certainly to be numbered in the beginning, only with this difference, that he wanted the corrupt heart too commonly attending a life of expedients; for he was generous, humane, and honorable, even though by profession a gamester.

A thousand instances might be given of his integrity, even in this infamous profession, where his generosity often impelled him to act in contradiction to his interest. Wherever he found a novice in the hands of a sharper, he generally forewarned him of the danger; whenever he found any inclined to play, yet ignorant of the game, he would offer his services, and play for them. I remember an instance to this effect, though too nearly concerned in the affair to publish the gentleman's name of whom it is related. In the year 1725 there came to Bath a giddy youth, who had just resigned his fellowship at Oxford. He brought his whole fortune with him there; it was but a trifle; however, he was resolved to venture it all. Good-fortune seemed kinder than could be expected. Without the smallest skill in play he won a sum sufficient to make any unambitious man happy. His de-

sire of gain increasing with his gains, in the October following he was at all, and added four thousand pounds to his former capital. Mr. Nash, one night, after losing a considerable sum to this undeserving son of fortune, invited him to supper. "Sir," cried this honest though veteran gamester, "perhaps you may imagine I have invited you in order to have my revenge at home, but I scorn so inhospitable an action. I desired the favor of your company to give you some advice, which, you will pardon me, sir, you seem to stand in need of. You are now high in spirits, and drawn away by a torrent of success; but there will come a time when you will repent having left the calm of a college life for the turbulent profession of a gamester. Ill runs will come, as sure as day and night succeed each other. Be therefore advised—remain content with your present gains; for be persuaded that had you the Bank of England, with your present ignorance of gaming, it would vanish like a fairy dream. You are a stranger to me, but to convince you of the part I take in your welfare, I'll give you fifty guineas, to forfeit twenty every time you lose two hundred at one sitting." The young gentleman refused his offer, and was at last undone!

The late Duke of B——,[1] being chagrined at losing a considerable sum, pressed Mr. Nash to tie him up for the future from playing deep. Accordingly, the Beau gave his Grace a hundred guineas, to forfeit ten thousand whenever he lost a sum to the same amount at play in one sitting. The Duke loved play to distraction, and soon after, at hazard, lost eight thousand guineas, and was going to throw for three thousand more, when Nash, catching hold of the dice-box, entreated his Grace to reflect upon the penalty if he lost. The Duke for that time desisted; but so strong was the *furor* of play upon him, that soon after, losing a considerable sum at Newmarket, he was contented to pay the penalty.[2]

When the late Earl of T——d was a youth he was passionately fond of play, and never better pleased than with having Mr. Nash for his antagonist. Nash saw with concern his lordship's foible, and

[1] Charles Powlett, third Duke of Bolton (died 1754). His second wife was Miss Lavinia Fenton, the actress, the original Polly, and famous as such, in the "Beggar's Opera."

[2] "Feb. 9, 1732.—A certain duke paid £5000 to Beau Nash, and agreed to allow him £400 per annum during life, in lieu of £10,000 he was to pay, in case the said nobleman should lose at hazard above £2000 pounds at one sitting, which he did in October last, at Newmarket."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. ii. p. 627.

undertook to cure him, though by a very disagreeable remedy. Conscious of his own superior skill, he determined to engage him in single play for a very considerable sum. His lordship, in proportion as he lost his game, lost his temper too; and as he approached the gulf seemed still more eager for ruin. He lost his estate: some writings were put into the winner's possession; his very equipage was deposited as a last stake, and he lost that also. But, when our generous gamester had found his lordship sufficiently punished for his temerity, he returned all, only stipulating that he should be paid five thousand pounds whenever he should think proper to make the demand. However, he never made any such demand during his lordship's life; but some time after his decease, Mr. Nash's affairs being in the wane, he demanded the money of his lordship's heirs, who honorably paid it without any hesitation.

But, whatever skill Nash might have acquired by long practice in play, he was never formed by nature for a successful gamester. He was constitutionally passionate and generous. To acquire a perfection in that art a man must be naturally phlegmatic, reserved, and cool; every passion must learn to obey control; but he frequently was unable to restrain the violence of his, and was often betrayed by this means into unbecoming rudeness or childish impertinence; was sometimes a minion of fortune, and as often depressed by adversity. While others made considerable fortunes at the gaming-table, he was ever in the power of chance; nor did even the intimacy with which he was received by the great place him in a state of independence.

The considerable inconveniences that were found to result from a permission of gaming at length attracted the attention of the legislature, and in the twelfth year of George II. the most prevalent games at that time were declared fraudulent and unlawful.[1] Every age has had its peculiar modes of gaming. The games of Gleek, Primero, In-and-In, and several others now exploded, employed our sharping ancestors; to these succeeded the Ace of Hearts, Pharaoh, Basset, and Hazard, all games of chance, like the former. But though in these the chances seemed equal to the novice, in general those who kept the bank were considerable winners. The act, therefore, passed upon this occasion declared all such games and lotteries illicit, and directed that all who should set up such games should forfeit two hundred pounds, to be levied by distress on the offender's goods; one-third to go to the in-

[1] Act 12 George II. (1739).

former, the residue to the poor. The act further declared that every person who played in any place, except in the royal palace where his Majesty resided, should forfeit fifty pounds, and should be condemned to pay treble costs in case of an appeal.

This law was scarcely made before it was eluded by the invention of divers fraudulent and deceitful games; and a particular game, called Passage, was daily practised, and contributed to the ruin of thousands. To prevent this, the ensuing year it was enacted that this and every other game invented, or to be invented, with one die, or more, or any other instrument of the same nature, with numbers thereon, should be subject to a similar penalty; and at the same time the persons playing with such instruments should be punished as above.

This amendment of the law soon gave birth to new evasions; the game of Rolly-Polly, Marlborough's Battles, but particularly the E O, were set up; and, strange to observe! several of those very noblemen who had given their voices to suppress gaming were the most ready to encourage it. This game was at first set up at Tunbridge. It was invented by one C——k, and carried on between him and one Mr. A——e, proprietor of the assembly-room at that place; and was reckoned extremely profitable to the bank, as it gained two and a half per cent. on all that was lost or won.

As all gaming was suppressed but this, Nash was now utterly destitute of any resource that he could expect from his superior skill and long experience in the art. The money to be gained in private gaming is at best but trifling, and the opportunity precarious. The minds of the generality of mankind shrink with their circumstances; and Nash, upon the immediate prospect of poverty, was now mean enough (I will call it no worse) to enter into a confederacy with those low creatures to evade the law and to share the plunder. The occasion was as follows:—The profits of the table were, as I observed, divided between C——k the inventor, and A——e the room-keeper. The first year's profits were extraordinary, and A——e, the room-keeper, now began to wish himself sole proprietor. The combinations of the worthless are ever of short duration. The next year, therefore, A——e turned C——k out of his room, and set up the game for himself. The gentlemen and ladies who frequented the wells, unmindful of the immense profit gained by these reptiles, still continued to game as before; and the keeper was triumphing in the success of his politics, when he was informed that C——k and his

friends had hired the crier to cry the game down. The consequences of this would have been fatal to A——e's interest; for by this means frauds might have been discovered, which would deter even the most ardent lovers of play. Immediately, therefore, while the crier was yet upon the walks, he applied to Mr. Nash to stop these proceedings, and at the same time offered him a fourth share of the bank, which Nash was mean enough to accept. This is the greatest blot in his life; and this, it is hoped, will find pardon.

The day after the inventor offered one-half of the bank; but this Mr. Nash thought proper to refuse, being pre-engaged to A——e. Upon which, being disappointed, he applied to one Mr. J——e, and under his protection another table was set up, and the company seemed to be divided equally between them. I cannot reflect without surprise at the folly of the gentlemen and ladies, in suffering themselves to be thus parcelled out between a pack of sharpers, and to be defrauded of their money without even the show of opposition. The company thus divided, Mr. Nash once more availed himself of their parties, and prevailed upon them to unite their banks, and to divide the gains into three shares, of which he reserved one to himself.

Nash had hitherto enjoyed a fluctuating fortune; and had he taken the advantage of the present opportunity, he might have been for the future not only above want, but even in circumstances of opulence. Had he cautiously employed himself in computing the benefits of the table, and exacting his stipulated share, he might have soon grown rich; but he entirely left the management of it to the people of the rooms; he took them (as he says in one of his memorials upon this occasion) to be honest, and never inquired what was won or lost; and it is probable they were seldom assiduous in informing him. I find a secret pleasure in thus displaying the insecurity of friendships among the base. They pretended to pay him regularly at first; but he soon discovered, as he says, that at Tunbridge he had suffered to the amount of two thousand guineas.

In the mean time, as the E O table thus succeeded at Tunbridge, Mr. Nash was resolved to introduce it at Bath, and previously asked the opinion of several lawyers, who declared it no way illegal. In consequence of this he wrote to Mrs. A——e, who kept one of the great rooms at Bath, acquainting her with the profits attending such a scheme, and proposing to have a fourth share with her and Mr. W——, the proprietor of the other room, for his authority and protection. To this Mr. W—— and she returned him for answer that

they would grant him a fifth share; which he consented to accept. Accordingly, he made a journey to London, and bespoke two tables, one for each room, at the rate of fifteen pounds each table.

The tables were no sooner set up at Bath than they were frequented by a greater concourse of gamesters than those at Tunbridge. Men of that infamous profession, from every part of the kingdom, and even other parts of Europe, flocked here to feed on the ruins of each other's fortune. This afforded another opportunity for Nash to become rich; but, as at Tunbridge, he thought the people here also would take care of him, and therefore he employed none to look after his interest. The first year they paid him what he thought just; the next, the woman of the room dying, her son paid him, and showed his books. Some time after the people of the rooms offered him one hundred pounds a year each for his share, which he refused; every succeeding year they continued to pay him less and less, until at length he found, as he pretends, that he had thus lost not less than twenty thousand pounds.

Thus they proceeded, deceiving the public and each other, until the legislature thought proper to suppress these seminaries of vice. It was enacted that after the 24th of June, 1745, none should be permitted to keep a house, room, or place, for playing, upon pain of such forfeitures as were declared in former acts instituted for that purpose.

The legislature likewise amended a law, made in the reign of Queen Anne, for recovering money lost at play, on the oath of the winner. By this act no person was rendered incapable of being a witness; and every person present at a gaming-table might be summoned by the magistrate who took cognizance of the affair. No privilege of parliament was allowed to those convicted of having gaming-tables in their houses. Those who lost ten pounds at one time were liable to be indicted within six months after the offence was committed; and being convicted, were to be fined five times the value of the sum won or lost, for the use of the poor. Any offender, before conviction, discovering another, so as to be convicted, was to be discharged from the penalties incurred by his own offences.

By this wise and just act all Nash's future hopes of succeeding by the tables were blown up. He had now only the justice and generosity of his confederates to trust to; but that he soon found to be a vain expectation; for, if we can depend on his own memorials, what at one time they confessed they would at another deny; and though upon some occasions they seemed at variance with each other, yet

when they were to oppose him, whom they considered as a common enemy, they generally united with confidence and success. He now, therefore, had nothing but a lawsuit to confide in for redress; and this is ever the last expedient to retrieve a desperate fortune. He accordingly threw his suit into Chancery, and by this means the public became acquainted with what he had long endeavored to conceal. They now found that he was himself concerned in the gaming-tables, of which he only seemed the conductor; and that he had shared part of the spoil, though he complained of having been defrauded of a just share.

The success of his suit was what might have been naturally expected: he had but at best a bad cause, and as the oaths of the defendants were alone sufficient to cast him in Chancery, it was not surprising that he was nonsuited. But the consequence of this affair was much more fatal than he had imagined: it lessened him in the esteem of the public; it drew several enemies against him, and in some measure diminished the authority of any defence he could make. From that time (about the year 1745) I find this good-natured but misguided man involved in continual disputes, every day calumniated with some new slander, and continually endeavoring to obviate its effects.

Upon these occasions his usual method was, by printed bills handed about among his acquaintance, to inform the public of his most private transactions with some of those creatures with whom he had formerly associated; but these apologies served rather to blacken his antagonists than to vindicate him. They were in general extremely ill written, confused, obscure, and sometimes unintelligible. By these, however, it appeared that W—— was originally obliged to him for the resort of company to his room; that Lady H——, who had all the company before W——'s room was built, offered Nash a hundred pounds for his protection; which he refused, having previously promised to support Mrs. W——. It appears by these apologies that the persons concerned in the rooms made large fortunes, while Nash still continued in pristine indigence; and that his nephew, for whom he had at first secured one of the rooms, was left in as great distress as he.

His enemies were not upon this occasion contented with aspersing him, as a confederate with sharpers; they even asserted that he embezzled the subscriptions of gentlemen and ladies which were given for useful or charitable purposes. But to such aspersions he answered by declaring, to use his own expression, before God and man, that

he never diverted one shilling of the said subscriptions to his own use, nor was he ever thought to have done it till new enemies started up against him.

Perhaps the reader may be curious to see one of these memorials, written by himself; and I will indulge his curiosity, merely to show a specimen of the style and manner of a man whose whole life was passed in a round of gayety and conversation, whose jests were a thousand times repeated, and whose company was courted by every son and daughter of fashion. The following is particularly levelled against those who, in the latter part of his life, took every opportunity to traduce his character:

"A MONITOR.

"'For the Lord hateth lying and deceitful lips.'—*Psalm.*

"The curse denounced in my motto is sufficient to intimidate any person who is not quite abandoned in their evil ways, and who have any fear of God before their eyes; everlasting burnings are a terrible reward for their misdoings; and nothing but the most hardened sinners will oppose the judgment of heaven, being without end. This reflection must be shocking to such as are conscious to themselves of having erred from the sacred dictates of the Psalmist; and who, following the blind impulse of passion, daily forging lies and deceit, to annoy their neighbor. But there are joys in heaven which they can never arrive at, whose whole study is to destroy the peace and harmony and good order of society in this place."

This carries little the air of a bagatelle; it rather seems a sermon in miniature, so different are some men in the closet and in conversation. The following I have taken at random from a heap of other memorials, all tending to set his combination with the aforementioned parties in a proper light:

"E O was first set up in A——e's room, the profits divided between one C——k (the inventor of the game) and A——e.

"The next year A——e, finding the game so advantageous, turned C——k out of his room and set the game up himself, but C——k and his friends hired the crier to cry the game down; upon which A——e came running to me to stop it, after he had cried it once, which I immediately did, and turned the crier off the walks.

"Then A——e asked me to go a fourth with him in the bank, which I consented to. C——k next day took me into his room

which he had hired, and proffered me to go half with him, which I refused, being engaged before to A——e.

"J——e then set up the same game, and complained that he had not half play at his room, upon which I made them agree to join their banks, and divide equally the gain and loss, and I to go the like share in the bank.

"I, taking them to be honest, never inquired what was won or lost, and thought they paid me honestly, till it was discovered they had defrauded me of 2000 guineas.

"I then arrested A——e, who told me I must go into Chancery, and that I should begin with the people of Bath, who had cheated me of ten times as much; and told my attorney that J——e had cheated me of 500, and wrote me word that I probably had it not under his hand, which never was used in play.

"Upon my arresting A——e I received a letter not to prosecute J——e, for he would be a very good witness; I writ a discharge to J——e for £125 in full, though he never paid me a farthing, upon his telling me if his debts were paid he was not worth a shilling.

"Every article of this I can prove from A——e's own mouth, as a reason that he allowed the bank-keepers but 10 per cent. because I went 20, and his suborning . . . to alter his informations.

"Richard Nash."

This gentleman's simplicity, in trusting persons whom he had no previous reasons to place confidence in, seems to be one of those lights into his character which, while they impeach his understanding, do honor to his benevolence. The low and timid are ever suspicious; but a heart impressed with honorable sentiments expects from others sympathetic sincerity.

But now that we have viewed his conduct as a gamester, and seen him on that side of his character which is by far the most unfavorable—seen him declining from his former favor and esteem, the just consequence of his quitting, though but ever so little, the paths of honor—let me turn to those brighter parts, which gained him the affection of his friends, the esteem of the corporation which he assisted, and may possibly attract the attention of posterity. By his successes we shall find that figuring in life proceeds less from the possession of great talents than from the proper application of moderate ones. Some great minds are only fitted to put forth their powers in the storm, and the occasion is often wanting during a whole life for a

great exertion; but trifling opportunities of shining are almost every hour offered to the little, sedulous mind, and a person thus employed is not only more pleasing, but more useful, in a state of tranquil society.

Though gaming first introduced him into polite company, this alone could hardly have carried him forward, without the assistance of a genteel address, much vivacity, some humor, and some wit. But, once admitted into the circle of the *beau monde*, he then laid claim to all the privileges by which it is distinguished. Among others, in the early part of his life he entered himself professedly into the service of the fair sex; he set up for a man of gallantry and intrigue; and, if we can credit the boasts of his old age, he often succeeded. In fact, the business of love somewhat resembles the business of physic: no matter for qualifications, he that makes vigorous pretensions to either is surest of success. Nature had by no means formed Mr. Nash for a *beau garçon;* his person was clumsy, too large and awkward, and his features harsh, strong, and peculiarly irregular; yet, even with those disadvantages, he made love, became a universal admirer of the sex, and was universally admired. He was possessed, at least, of some requisites of a lover. He had assiduity, flattery, fine clothes, and as much wit as the ladies he addressed. Wit, flattery, and fine clothes, he used to say, were enough to debauch a nunnery. But my fair readers of the present day are exempt from this scandal; and it is no matter now what he said of their grandmothers.

As Nestor was a man of three ages, so Nash sometimes humorously called himself a beau of three generations. He had seen flaxen bobs succeeded by majors, which in their turn gave way to negligents, which were at last totally routed by bags and Ramilies. The manner in which gentlemen managed their amours, in these different ages of fashion, were not more different than their periwigs. The lover in the reign of King Charles was solemn, majestic, and formal. He visited his mistress in state, languished for the favor, kneeled when he toasted his goddess, walked with solemnity, performed the most trifling things with decorum, and even took snuff with a flourish. The beau of the latter part of Queen Anne's reign was disgusted with so much formality; he was pert, smart, and lively; his billets-doux were written in a quite different style from that of his antiquated predecessor; he was ever laughing at his own ridiculous situation; till at last he persuaded the lady to become as ridiculous as himself. The beau of the third age, in which Mr. Nash died, was still more extraordinary than either;

his whole secret in intrigue consisted in perfect indifference. The only way to make love now, I have heard Mr. Nash say, was to take no manner of notice of the lady; which method was found the surest way to secure her affections.

However these things be, this gentleman's amours were in reality very much confined in the second and third age of intrigue; his character was too public for a lady to consign her reputation to his keeping. But in the beginning of life, it is said, he knew the secret history of the times, and contributed himself to swell the page of scandal. Were I upon the present occasion to hold the pen of a novelist, I could recount some amours in which he was successful. I could fill a volume with little anecdotes which contain neither pleasure nor instruction; with histories of professing lovers, and poor believing girls deceived by such professions. But such adventures are easily written, and as easily achieved. The plan even of fictitious novel is quite exhausted; but truth, which I have followed here, and ever design to follow, presents in the affair of love scarce any variety. The manner in which one reputation is lost exactly resembles that by which another is taken away. The gentleman begins at timid distance, grows more bold, becomes rude, till the lady is married or undone: such is the substance of every modern novel; nor will I gratify the pruriency of folly at the expense of every other pleasure my narration may afford.

Mr. Nash did not long continue a universal gallant; but in the earlier years of his reign entirely gave up his endeavors to deceive the sex, in order to become the honest protector of their innocence, the guardian of their reputation, and a friend to their virtue. This was a character he bore for many years, and supported it with integrity, assiduity, and success. It was his constant practice to do everything in his power to prevent the fatal consequences of rash and inconsiderate love; and there are many persons now alive who owe their present happiness to his having interrupted the progress of an amour that threatened to become unhappy, or even criminal, by privately making their guardians or parents acquainted with what he could discover.[1] And his manner of disconcerting these schemes was

[1] "The gods, their peculiar favor to show,
Sent Hermes to Bath in the shape of a BEAU: . . .
Long reign'd the great NASH, this omnipotent lord,
Respected by youth, and by parents adored;

such as generally secured him from the rage and resentment of the disappointed. One night when I was in Wiltshire's room Nash came up to a lady and her daughter, who were people of no inconsiderable fortune, and bluntly told the mother *she had better be at home:* this was at that time thought an audacious piece of impertinence, and the lady turned away piqued and disconcerted. Nash, however, pursued her and repeated the words again, when the old lady, wisely conceiving there might be some hidden meaning couched under this seeming insolence, retired, and coming to her lodgings found a coach-and-six at the door, which a sharper had provided to carry off her eldest daughter.

I shall beg leave to give some other instances of Mr. Nash's good-nature on these occasions, as I have had the accounts from himself. At the conclusion of the treaty of peace at Utrecht, Colonel M—— was one of the thoughtless, agreeable, gay creatures that drew the attention of the company at Bath. He danced and talked with great vivacity; and when he gamed among the ladies he showed that his attention was employed rather upon their hearts than their fortunes. His own fortune, however, was a trifle when compared to the elegance of his expense; and his imprudence at last was so great that it obliged him to sell an annuity arising from his commission, to keep up his splendor a little longer.

However thoughtless he might be, he had the happiness of gaining the affections of Miss L——, whose father designed her a very large fortune. This lady was courted by a nobleman of distinction; but she refused his addresses, resolved upon gratifying rather her inclinations than her avarice. The intrigue went on successfully between her and the colonel, and they both would certainly have been married and been undone, had not Mr. Nash apprised her father of their intentions. The old gentleman recalled his daughter from Bath, and offered Nash a very considerable present for the care he had taken, which he refused.

In the mean time Colonel M—— had an intimation how his in-

For him not enough at a ball to preside,
The unwary and beautiful nymph would he guide;
Oft tell her a tale how the credulous maid
By man, by perfidious man, is betray'd;
Taught Charity's hand to relieve the distrest,
While tears have his tender compassion exprest."

ANSTEY. (Letter XI.)

trigue came to be discovered, and by taxing Nash found that his suspicions were not without foundation. A challenge was the immediate consequence, which the King of Bath, conscious of having only done his duty, thought proper to decline. As none are permitted to wear swords at Bath, the colonel found no opportunity of gratifying his resentment, and waited with impatience to find Mr. Nash in town, to require proper satisfaction.

During this interval, however, he found his creditors become too importunate for him to remain longer at Bath; and his finances and credit being quite exhausted, he took the desperate resolution of going over to the Dutch army in Flanders, where he enlisted himself a volunteer. Here he underwent all the fatigues of a private sentinel, with the additional misery of receiving no pay, and his friends in England gave out that he was shot at the battle of ——.

In the mean time the nobleman pressed his passion with ardor; but during the progress of his amour the young lady's father died, and left her heiress to a fortune of fifteen hundred a year. She thought herself now disengaged from her former passion. An absence of two years had in some measure abated her love for the colonel; and the assiduity, the merit, and the real regard of the gentleman who still continued to solicit her were almost too powerful for her constancy. Mr. Nash, in the mean time, took every opportunity of inquiring after Colonel M——, and found that he had for some time been returned to England, but had changed his name, in order to avoid the fury of his creditors, and was entered into a company of strolling players, at that time exhibiting at Peterborough.

He now, therefore, thought he owed the colonel, in justice, an opportunity of promoting his fortune, as he had once deprived him of an occasion of satisfying his love. Our Beau therefore invited the lady to be of a party to Peterborough, and offered his own equipage, which was then one of the most elegant in England, to conduct her there. The proposal being accepted, the lady, the nobleman, and Mr. Nash arrived in town just as the players were going to begin.

Colonel M——, who used every means of remaining incognito, and who was too proud to make his distresses known to any of his former acquaintance, was now degraded into the character of Tom in the "Conscious Lovers." Miss L—— was placed in the foremost row of spectators, her lord on one side and the impatient Nash on the other, when the unhappy youth appeared in that despicable situation upon the stage. The moment he came on his former mistress struck his

view; but his amazement was increased when he saw her fainting away in the arms of those who sat behind her. He was incapable of proceeding, and, scarcely knowing what he did, he flew and caught her in his arms.

"Colonel," cried Nash, when they were in some measure recovered, "you once thought me your enemy, because I endeavored to prevent you both from ruining each other; you were then wrong, and you have long had my forgiveness. If you love well enough now for matrimony, you fairly have my consent, and d—n him, say I, that attempts to part you." Their nuptials were solemnized soon after, and affluence added a zest to all their future enjoyments. Mr. Nash had the thanks of each, and he afterwards spent several agreeable days in that society which he had contributed to render happy.

I shall beg the reader's patience while I give another instance in which he ineffectually offered his assistance and advice. This story is not from himself, but told us partly by Mr. Wood, the architect, of Bath,[1] as it fell particularly within his own knowledge, and partly from another memoir to which he refers.

Miss Sylvia S—— was descended from one of the best families in the kingdom, and was left a large fortune upon her sister's decease. She had early in life been introduced into the best company, and contracted a passion for elegance and expense. It is usual to make the heroine of a story very witty and very beautiful, and such circumstances are so surely expected that they are scarce attended to. But whatever the finest poet could conceive of wit, or the most celebrated painter imagine of beauty, were excelled in the perfections of this young lady. Her superiority in both was allowed by all who either heard or had seen her. She was naturally gay, generous to a fault, good-natured to the highest degree, affable in conversation, and some of her letters and other writings, as well in verse as prose, would have shone among those of the most celebrated wits of this or any other age, had they been published.

But these great qualifications were marked by another, which lessened the value of them all. She was imprudent. But let it not be imagined that her reputation or honor suffered by her imprudence: I only mean she had no knowledge of the use of money: she relieved distress by putting herself into the circumstances of the object whose wants she supplied.

[1] Wood's "History of Bath," vol. ii. p. 446. The lady's real name was Miss Fanny Braddock. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. i. p. 397.

She was arrived at the age of nineteen, when the crowd of her lovers and the continual repetition of new flattery had taught her to think she could never be forsaken, and never poor. Young ladies are apt to expect a certainty of success from a number of lovers; and yet I have seldom seen a girl courted by a hundred lovers that found a husband in any. Before the choice is fixed she has either lost her reputation or her good-sense, and the loss of either is sufficient to consign her to perpetual virginity.

Among the number of this young lady's lovers was the celebrated S——, who at that time went by the name of "the good-natured man."[1] This gentleman, with talents that might have done honor to humanity, suffered himself to fall at length into the lowest state of debasement. He followed the dictates of every newest passion; his love, his pity, his generosity, and even his friendships, were all in excess; he was unable to make head against any of his sensations or desires, but they were in general worthy wishes and desires, for he was constitutionally virtuous. This gentleman, who at last died in jail, was at that time this lady's envied favorite.

It is probable that he, thoughtless creature, had no other prospect from this amour but that of passing the present moments agreeably. He only courted dissipation, but the lady's thoughts were fixed on happiness. At length, however, his debts amounting to a considerable sum, he was arrested and thrown into prison. He endeavored at first to conceal his situation from his beautiful mistress; but she soon came to a knowledge of his distress, and took the fatal resolution of freeing him from confinement by discharging all the demands of his creditors.

Mr. Nash was at that time in London, and represented to the thoughtless young lady that such a measure would effectually ruin both; that so warm a concern for the interests of Mr. S—— would, in the first place, quite impair her fortune in the eyes of our sex, and, what was worse, lessen her reputation in those of her own. He added, that thus bringing Mr. S—— from prison would be only a temporary relief; that a mind so generous as his would become bankrupt under the load of gratitude; and, instead of improving in friendship or affection, he would only study to avoid a creditor he could never repay; that though small favors produce good-will, great ones destroy

[1] We have here the first hint of a character used afterwards by Goldsmith in his admirable comedy of "The Good-Natured Man." See Vol. I. p. 157.

friendship. These admonitions, however, were disregarded, and she found, too late, the prudence and truth of her adviser. In short, her fortune was by this means exhausted; and, with all her attractions, she found her acquaintance began to disesteem her in proportion as she became poor.

In this situation she accepted Mr. Nash's invitation of returning to Bath. He promised to introduce her to the best company there, and he was assured that her merit would do the rest. Upon her very first appearance ladies of the highest distinction courted her friendship and esteem; but a settled melancholy had taken possession of her mind, and no amusements that they could propose were sufficient to divert it. Yet still, as if from habit, she followed the crowd in its levities, and frequented those places where all persons endeavored to forget themselves in the bustle of ceremony and show.

Her beauty, her simplicity, and her unguarded situation soon drew the attention of a designing wretch, who at that time kept one of the rooms at Bath, and who thought that this lady's merit, properly managed, might turn to good account. This woman's name was Dame Lindsey, a creature who, though vicious, was in appearance sanctified, and, though designing, had some wit and humor. She began by the humblest assiduity to ingratiate herself with Miss S——; showed that she could be amusing as a companion, and, by frequent offers of money, proved that she could be useful as a friend. Thus by degrees she gained an entire ascendency over this poor, thoughtless, deserted girl; and in less than one year—namely, about 1727—Miss S——, without ever transgressing the laws of virtue, had entirely lost her reputation. Whenever a person was wanting to make up a party for play at Dame Lindsey's, Sylvia, as she was then familiarly called, was sent for, and was obliged to suffer all those slights which the rich but too often let fall upon their inferiors in point of fortune.

In most, even the greatest minds, the heart at last becomes level with the meanness of its condition; but in this charming girl it struggled hard with adversity, and yielded to every encroachment of contempt with sullen reluctance. But though in the course of three years she was in the very eye of public inspection, yet Mr. Wood, the architect, avers that he could never, by the strictest observations, perceive her to be tainted with any other vice than that of suffering herself to be decoyed to the gaming-table, and at her own hazard playing for the amusement and advantage of others. Her friend Mr. Nash therefore thought proper to induce her to break off all connec-

tions with Dame Lindsey, and to rent part of Mr. Wood's house, in Queen Square, where she behaved with the utmost complaisance, regularity, and virtue.

In this situation her detestation of life still continued. She found that time would infallibly deprive her of part of her attractions, and that continual solicitude would impair the rest. With these reflections she would frequently entertain herself and an old faithful maid in the vales of Bath, whenever the weather would permit them to walk out. She would even sometimes start questions in company, with seeming unconcern, in order to know what act of suicide was easiest, and which was attended with the smallest pain. When tired with exercise she generally retired to meditation, and she became habituated to early hours of sleep and rest; but when the weather prevented her usual exercise, and her sleep was thus more difficult, she made it a rule to rise from her bed and walk about her chamber till she began to find an inclination for repose.

This custom made it necessary for her to order a candle to be kept burning all night in her room; and the maid usually, when she withdrew, locked the chamber door, and pushing the key under it beyond reach, her mistress, by that constant method, lay undisturbed till seven o'clock in the morning, when she arose, unlocked the door, and rung the bell as a signal for the maid to return.

This state of seeming piety, regularity, and prudence continued for some time, till the gay, celebrated, toasted Miss Sylvia was sunk into a house-keeper to the gentleman at whose house she lived. She was unable to keep company, for want of the elegancies of dress, which are the usual passports among the polite; and was too haughty to seem to want them. The fashionable, the amusing, and the polite in society now seldom visited her; and, from being once the object of every eye, she was now deserted by all, and preyed upon by the bitter reflections of her own imprudence.

Mr. Wood and part of his family were gone to London, and Miss Sylvia was left with the rest as a governess at Bath. She sometimes saw Mr. Nash, and acknowledged the friendship of his admonitions, though she refused to accept any other marks of his generosity than that of advice. Upon the close of the day on which Mr. Wood was expected to return from London she expressed some uneasiness at the disappointment of not seeing him, took particular care to settle the affairs of his family, and then, as usual, sat down to meditation. She now cast a retrospect over her past misconduct and her approaching

misery; she saw that even affluence gave her no real happiness, and from indigence she thought nothing could be hoped but lingering calamity. She at length conceived the fatal resolution of leaving a life in which she could see no corner for comfort, and terminating a scene of imprudence in suicide.

Thus resolved, she sat down at her dining-room window, and with cool intrepidity wrote the following lines on one of the panes of the window:

"O Death! thou pleasing end of human woe!
Thou cure for life! thou greatest good below!
Still may'st thou fly the coward and the slave,
And thy soft slumbers only bless the brave."

She then went into company with the most cheerful serenity, talked of indifferent subjects till supper, which she ordered to be got ready in a little library belonging to the family. There she spent the remaining hours preceding bedtime in dandling two of Mr. Wood's children on her knees. In retiring from thence to her chamber she went into the nursery, to take her leave of another child as it lay sleeping in the cradle. Struck with the innocence of the little babe's looks, and the consciousness of her meditated guilt, she could not avoid bursting into tears and hugging it in her arms; she then bid her old servant a good-night, for the first time she had ever done so, and went to bed as usual.

It is probable she soon quitted her bed, and was seized with an alternation of passions, before she yielded to the impulse of despair. She dressed herself in clean linen and white garments of every kind, like a bride'smaid. Her gown was pinned over her breast, just as a nurse pins the swaddling-clothes of an infant. A pink silk girdle was the instrument with which she resolved to terminate her misery, and this was lengthened by another made of gold thread. The end of the former was tied with a noose, and the latter with three knots, at a small distance from one another.

Thus prepared, she sat down again and read; for she left the book open at that place in the story of Olympia, in the "Orlando Furioso" of Ariosto, where, by the perfidy and ingratitude of her bosom friend, she was ruined and left to the mercy of an unpitying world. This fatal event gave her fresh spirits to go through her tragical purpose; so, standing upon a stool, and flinging the girdle, which was tied round her neck, over a closet door that opened into her chamber, she remained suspended. Her weight, however, broke the girdle, and the

poor despairer fell on the floor with such violence that her fall awakened a workman that lay in the house, about half an hour after two o'clock. Recovering herself, she began to walk about the room, as her usual custom was when she wanted sleep; and the workman, imagining it to be only some ordinary accident, again went to sleep. She once more, therefore, had recourse to a stronger girdle made of silver thread, and this kept her suspended till she died. Her old maid continued in the morning to wait as usual for the ringing of the bell, and protracted her patience, hour after hour, till two o'clock in the afternoon; when the workmen at length entering the room through the window, found their unfortunate mistress still hanging and quite cold. The coroner's jury being empanelled, brought in their verdict lunacy, and her corpse was next night decently buried in her father's grave,[1] at the charge of a female companion, with whom she had for many years an inseparable intimacy.

Thus ended a female wit, a toast, and a gamester; loved, admired, and forsaken: formed for the delight of society, fallen by imprudence into an object of pity. Hundreds in high life lamented her fate, and wished, when too late, to redress her injuries. They who once had helped to impair her fortune now regretted that they had assisted in so mean a pursuit. The little effects she had left behind were bought up with the greatest avidity by those who desired to preserve some token of a companion that once had given them such delight. The remembrance of every virtue she was possessed of was now improved by pity. Her former follies were few, but the last swelled them to a large amount; and she remains the strongest instance to posterity that want of prudence alone almost cancels every other virtue.

In all this unfortunate lady's affairs Mr. Nash took a peculiar concern; he directed her when they played, advised her when she deviated from the rules of caution, and performed the last offices of friendship after her decease, by raising the auction of her little effects.

But he was not only the assistant and the friend of the fair sex; he was also their defender. He secured their persons from insult, and their reputations from scandal. Nothing offended him more than a young fellow's pretending to receive favors from ladies he probably never saw: nothing pleased him so much as seeing such a piece of

[1] "She was buried in a decent manner in the Abbey church (9th of September, 1731), in the grave of her honest, brave old father (General Braddock)."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. i. p. 397.

deliberate mischief punished. Nash and one of his friends, being newly arrived at Tunbridge from Bath, were one day on the walks, and seeing a young fellow of fortune with whom they had some slight acquaintance, joined him. After the usual chat and news of the day was over, Mr. Nash asked him how long he had been at the Wells, and what company was there. The other replied he had been at Tunbridge a month; but as for company, he could find as good at a Tyburn ball. Not a soul was to be seen except a parcel of gamesters and strumpets, who would grant the last favor for a single stake at the Pharaoh bank. "Look you there," continued he, "that goddess of midnight, so fine at t'other end of the walks, by Jove, she was mine this morning for half a guinea; and she there, who brings up the rear, with powdered hair and dirty ruffles, she's pretty enough, but cheap, perfectly cheap: why, my boys, to my own knowledge you may have her for a crown and a dish of chocolate into the bargain — last Wednesday night we were happy." "Hold there, sir!" cried the gentleman; "as for your having the first lady, it is possible it may be true, and I intend to ask her about it, for she is my sister; but as to your being happy with the other last Wednesday, I am sure you are a lying rascal. She is my wife, and we came here but last night." The buck vainly asked pardon; the gentleman was going to give him proper chastisement, when Mr. Nash interposed in his behalf, and obtained his pardon upon condition that he quitted Tunbridge immediately.

But Mr. Nash not only took care, during his administration, to protect the ladies from the insults of our sex, but to guard them from the slanders of each other. He, in the first place, prevented any animosities that might arise from place and precedence, by being previously acquainted with the rank and quality of almost every family in the British dominions. He endeavored to render scandal odious, by marking it as the result of envy and folly united. Not even Solon could have enacted a wiser law in such a society as Bath. The gay, the heedless, and the idle, who mostly compose the group of water-drinkers, seldom are at the pains of talking upon universal topics which require comprehensive thought or abstract reasoning. The adventures of the little circle of their own acquaintance, or of some names of quality and fashion, make up their whole conversation. But it is too likely that, when we mention those, we wish to depress them, in order to render ourselves more conspicuous: Scandal must therefore have fixed her throne at Bath preferable to any other part of the

kingdom. However, though these endeavors could not totally suppress this custom among the fair, yet they gained him the friendship of several ladies of distinction who had smarted pretty severely under the lash of censure.

Among this number was the old Duchess of Marlborough, who conceived a particular friendship for him, and which continued during her life. She frequently consulted him in several concerns of a private nature. Her letting leases, building bridges, or forming canals were often carried on under his guidance; but she advised with him particularly in purchasing liveries for the footmen — a business to which she thought his genius best adapted. As anything relative to her may please the curiosity of such as delight in the anecdotes and letters of the great, however dull and insipid, I shall beg leave to present them with one or two of her epistles, collected at a venture from several others to the same purpose:

"*To* Mr. Nash, *at the Bath.*

"Blenheim, Sept. 18, 1724.

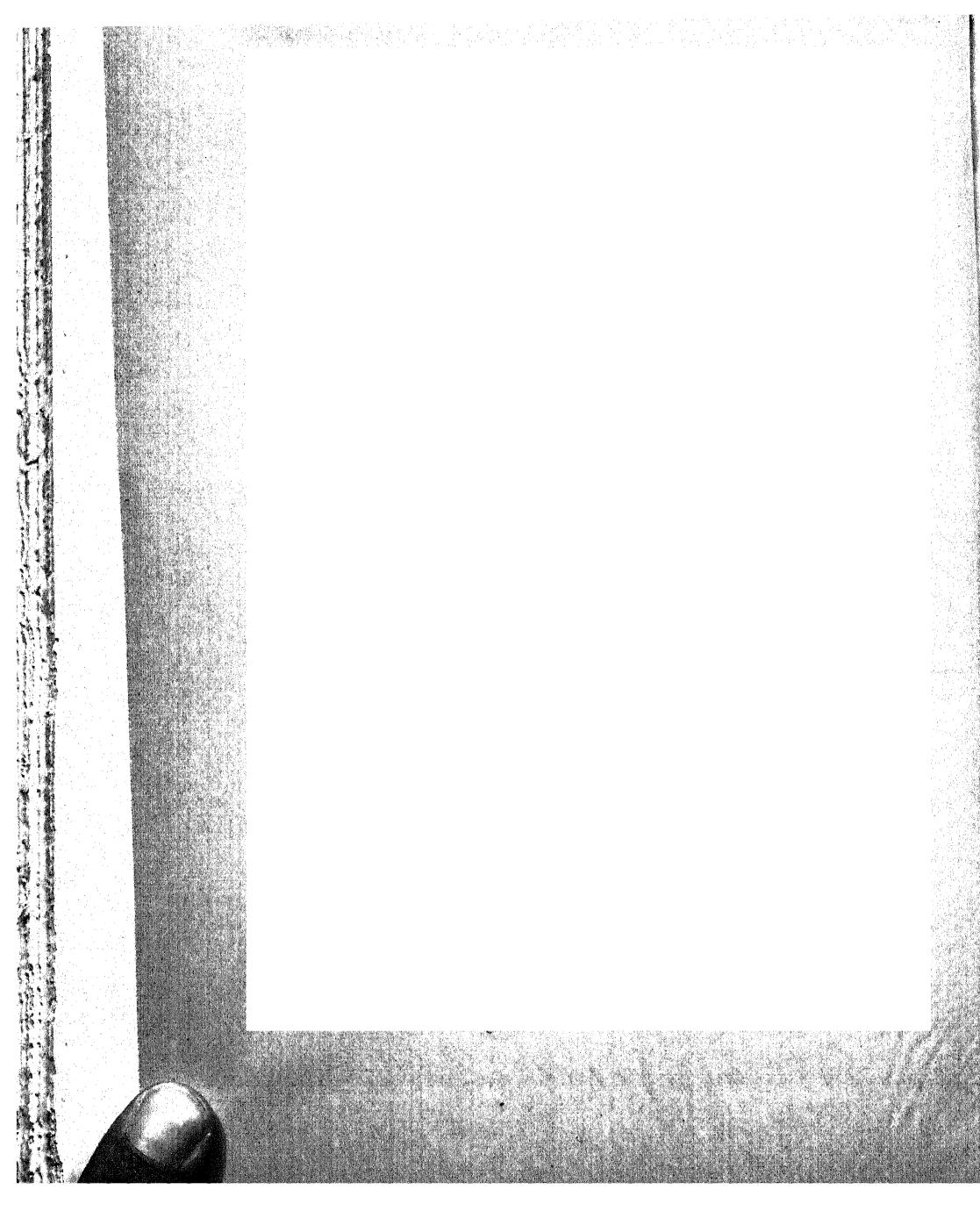
"Mr. Jennens will give you an account how little time I have in my power, and that will make my excuse for not thanking you sooner for the favor of your letter, and for the trouble you have given yourself in bespeaking the cloth, which I am sure will be good, since you have undertaken to order it. Pray ask Mrs. Jennens concerning the cascade, which will satisfy all doubts in that matter; she saw it play, which it will do in great beauty, for at least six hours together, and it runs enough to cover all the stones constantly, and is a hundred feet broad, which I am told is a much greater breadth than any cascade is in England; and this will be yet better than it is when it is quite finished; this water is a great addition to this place, and the lake being thirty acres, out of which the cascade comes, and falls into the canal that goes through the bridge, it makes that look as if it was necessary which before seemed so otherwise.—I am your most humble servant, S. Marlborough."

"*To* Mr. Nash, *at the Bath.*

"Marlborough House, May 17, 1735.

"Sir,—I have received the favor of yours of the 10th of May, with that from Mr. Harvey; and by last post I received a letter from Mr. Overton, a sort of a bailiff and a surveyor, whom I have employed a great while upon my estates in Wiltshire. He is a very active and

Duchess of Marlborough





very useful man of his sort. He writes to me that Mr. Harvey has been with him, and brought him a paper, which I sent you. He says, that finding he was a man that was desirous to serve me, he had assisted him all he could, by informations which he has given; and that he should continue to assist him. I have writ to him that he did mighty well. There is likewise a considerable tenant of my Lord Bruce's, his name is Cannons, who has promised me his assistance towards recommending tenants for these farms. And if Mr. Harvey happens to know such a man, he may put him in mind of it. I am sure you will do me all the good you can. And I hope you are sure that I shall always be sensible of the obligations I have to you, and ever be your most thankful and obliged humble servant,

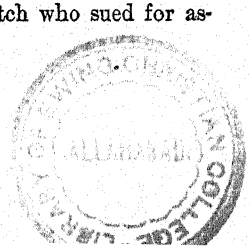
"S. MARLBOROUGH.

"Mr. Harvey may conclude to take any prices that were given you in the paper. But as I know that we have been scandalously cheated, if he finds that anything can be let better than it has been let, I do not doubt but he will do it."

The Duchess of Marlborough seems to have been not a much better writer than Mr. Nash; but she was worth many hundred thousand pounds, and that might console her. It may give splenetic philosophy, however, some scope for meditation, when it considers what a parcel of stupid trifles the world is ready to admire.

Whatever might have been Mr. Nash's other excellences, there was one in which few exceeded him; I mean his extensive humanity. None felt pity more strongly, and none made greater efforts to relieve distress. If I were to name any reigning and fashionable virtue in the present age, I think it should be charity. The numberless benefactions privately given, the various public solicitations for charity, and the success they meet with, serve to prove that though we may fall short of our ancestors in other respects, yet in this instance we greatly excel them. I know not whether it may not be spreading the influence of Mr. Nash too widely to say that he was one of the principal causes of introducing this noble emulation among the rich; but certain it is no private man ever relieved the distresses of so many as he did.

Before gaming was suppressed, and in the meridian of his life and fortune, his benefactions were generally found to equal his other expenses. The money he got without pain he gave away without reluctance; and whenever unable to relieve a wretch who sued for as-



sistance, he has been often seen to shed tears. A gentleman of broken fortune, one day standing behind his chair as he was playing a game of picquet for two hundred pounds, and observing with what indifference he won the money, could not avoid whispering these words to another who stood by: "Heavens! how happy would all that money make me!" Nash, overhearing him, clapped the money into his hand and cried, "Go and be happy."

About six-and-thirty years ago a clergyman brought his family to Bath for the benefit of the waters. His wife labored under a lingering disorder, which it was thought nothing but the Hot-wells could remove. The expenses of living there soon lessened the poor man's finances; his clothes were sold, piece by piece, to provide a temporary relief for his little family, and his appearance was at last so shabby that, from the number of holes in his coat and stockings, Nash gave him the name of Doctor Cullender. Our beau, it seems, was rude enough to make a jest of poverty, though he had sensibility enough to relieve it. The poor clergyman combated his distresses with fortitude; and, instead of attempting to solicit relief, endeavored to conceal them. Upon a living of thirty pounds a year he endeavored to maintain his wife and six children; but all his resources at last failed him, and nothing but famine was seen in the wretched family. The poor man's circumstances were at last communicated to Nash, who, with his usual cheerfulness, undertook to relieve him. On a Sunday evening, at a public tea-drinking at Harrison's, he went about to collect a subscription, and began it himself by giving five guineas. By this means two hundred guineas were collected in less than two hours, and the poor family raised from the lowest despondence into affluence and felicity. A bounty so unexpected had a better influence even upon the woman's constitution than all that either the physicians or the waters of Bath could produce, and she recovered. But his good offices did not rest here. He prevailed upon a nobleman of his acquaintance to present the Doctor with a living of £160 a year, which made that happiness he had before produced in some measure permanent.

In the severe winter of the year 1739 his charity was great, useful, and extensive. He frequently, at that season of calamity, entered the houses of the poor whom he thought too proud to beg and generously relieved them. The colliers were at this time peculiarly distressed; and in order to excite compassion a number of them yoked themselves to a wagon loaded with coals, and drew it into Bath, and presented it to Mr. Nash. Their scheme had the proper effect. Mr. Nash

procured them a subscription, and gave ten guineas towards it himself. The weavers also shared his bounty at that season. They came begging in a body into Bath, and he provided a plentiful dinner for their entertainment, and gave each a week's subsistence at going away.

There are few public charities to which he was not a subscriber, and many he principally contributed to support. Among others, Mr. Annesley—that strange example of the mutability of fortune and the inefficacy of our laws—shared his interest and bounty. I have now before me a well-written letter addressed to Mr. Nash in order to obtain his interest for that unhappy gentleman; it comes from Mr. Henderson, a Quaker, who was Mr. Annesley's father's agent. This gentleman warmly espoused the young adventurer's interest, and, I am told, fell with him.

"London, October 23, 1756.

"My Good Friend,—When I had the honor of conversing with thee at Tunbridge, in September last, concerning that most singular striking case of Mr. Annesley, whom I have known since he was about six years old, I being then employed by the late Lord Baron of Altham, his father, as his agent. From what I know of the affairs of that family, I am well assured that Mr. Annesley is the legitimate son of the late Lord Baron of Altham, and in consequence thereof is entitled to the honors and estates of Anglesey. Were I not well assured of his rights to those honors and estates I would not give countenance to his claim. I well remember that thou then madest me a promise to assist him in soliciting a subscription that was then begun at Tunbridge; but, as that place was not within the limits of thy province, thou couldst not promise to do much there. But thou saidst that in case he would go to Bath in the season, thou wouldst then and there show how much thou wouldst be his friend.

"And now, my good friend, as the season is come on, and Mr. Annesley now at Bath, I beg leave to remind thee of that promise; and that thou wilt keep in full view the honor, the everlasting honor, that will naturally redound to thee from thy benevolence, and crown all the good actions of thy life. I say, now in the vale of life, to relieve a distressed young nobleman, to extricate so immense an estate from the hands of oppression—to do this, will fix such a ray of glory on thy memory as will speak forth thy praise to future ages. This, with great respect, is the needful, from thy assured friend,

"William Henderson.

"Be pleased to give my respects to Mr. Annesley and his spouse."

Mr. Nash punctually kept his word with this gentleman. He began the subscription himself with the utmost liberality, and procured such a list of encouragers as at once did honor to Mr. Annesley's cause and their own generosity. What a pity it was that this money, which was given for the relief of indigence only, went to feed a set of reptiles who batten upon our weakness, miseries, and vice!

It may not be known to the generality of my readers that the last act of the comedy called "Æsop," which was added to the French plot of Boursault by Mr. Vanbrugh, was taken from a story told of Mr. Nash upon a similar occasion.[1] He had in the early part of life made proposals of marriage to Miss V——, of D——: his affluence at that time, and the favor which he was in with the nobility, readily induced the young lady's father to favor his addresses. However, upon opening the affair to herself, she candidly told him her affections were placed upon another, and that she could not possibly comply. Though this answer satisfied Mr. Nash, it was by no means sufficient to appease the father, and he peremptorily insisted upon her obedience. Things were carried to the last extremity, when Mr. Nash undertook to settle the affair; and, desiring his favored rival to be sent for, with his own hand presented his mistress to him, together with a fortune equal to what her father intended to give her. Such an uncommon instance of generosity had an instant effect upon the severe parent; he considered such disinterestedness as a just reproach to his own mercenary disposition, and took his daughter once more into favor. I wish, for the dignity of history, that the sequel could be concealed; but the young lady ran away with her footman before half a year was expired, and her husband died of grief.

In general the benefactions of a generous man are but ill bestowed. His heart seldom gives him leave to examine the real distress of the object which sues for pity; his good-nature takes the alarm too soon, and he bestows his fortune on only apparent wretchedness. The man naturally frugal, on the other hand, seldom relieves; but when he does, his reason, and not his sensations, generally find out the object. Every instance of his bounty is therefore permanent, and bears witness to his benevolence.

Of all the immense sums which Nash lavished upon real or apparent wretchedness, the effects, after a few years, seemed to disappear.

[1] Vanbrugh's "Æsop" was produced at Drury Lane Theatre in 1697, when Nash was in his twenty-fourth year.

His money was generally given to support immediate want, or to relieve improvident indolence, and therefore it vanished in an hour. Perhaps towards the close of life, were he to look round on the thousand he had relieved, he would find but few made happy, or fixed by his bounty in a state of thriving industry: it was enough for him that he gave to those that wanted; he never reflected that charity to some might impoverish himself without relieving them; he seldom considered the merit or the industry of the petitioner; or he rather fancied that misery was an excuse for indolence and guilt. It was a usual saying of his, when he went to beg for any person in distress, that they who could stoop to the meanness of solicitation must certainly want the favor for which they petitioned.

In this manner, therefore, he gave away immense sums of his own, and still greater which he procured from others. His way was, when any person was proposed to him as an object of charity, to go round with his hat first among the nobility, according to their rank, and so on, till he left scarce a single person unsolicited. They who go thus about to beg for others generally find a pleasure in the task. They consider, in some measure, every benefaction they procure as given by themselves, and have at once the pleasure of being liberal without the self-reproach of being profuse.

But of all the instances of Nash's bounty none does him more real honor than the pains he took in establishing an hospital at Bath, in which benefaction, however, Dr. Oliver had a great share. This was one of those well-guided charities dictated by reason and supported by prudence. By this institution the diseased poor might recover health, when incapable of receiving it in any other part of the kingdom. As the disorders of the poor who could expect to find relief at Bath were mostly chronical, the expense of maintaining them there was found more than their parishes thought proper to afford. They therefore chose to support them in a continual state of infirmity, by a small allowance at home, rather than be at the charge of an expensive cure. An hospital, therefore, at Bath, it was thought, would be an asylum to those disabled creatures, and would at the same time give the physician a more thorough insight into the efficacy of the waters, from the regularity with which such patients would be obliged to take them. These inducements, therefore, influenced Dr. Oliver and Nash to promote a subscription towards such a benefaction. The design was set on foot so early as the year 1711, but was not completed till the year 1742. This delay, which seems surprising, was in

fact owing to the want of a proper fund for carrying the work into execution. What I said above, of charity being the characteristic virtue of the present age, will be more fully evinced by comparing the old and new subscriptions for this hospital. These will show the difference between ancient and modern benevolence. When I run my eye over the list of those who subscribed in the year 1723, I find the subscription in general seldom rise above a guinea each person; so that, at that time, with all their efforts, they were unable to raise four hundred pounds; but in about twenty years after each particular subscription was greatly increased — ten, twenty, thirty pounds being the most ordinary sums then subscribed, and they soon raised above two thousand pounds for the purpose.

Thus, chiefly by the means of Dr. Oliver and Mr. Nash, but not without the assistance of the good Mr. Allen,[1] who gave them the stone for building and other benefactions, this hospital was erected; and it is at present fitted up for the reception of one hundred and ten patients, the cases mostly paralytic or leprous.

The following conditions are observed previous to admittance:

"I. The case of the patient must be described by some physician or person of skill in the neighborhood of the place where the patient has resided for some time; and this description, together with a certificate of the poverty of the patient, attested by some persons of credit, must be sent in a letter, post-paid, directed to the registrar of the General Hospital of Bath.

"II. After the patient's case has been thus described, and sent, he must remain in his usual place or residence till he has notice of a vacancy, signified by a letter from the registrar.

"III. Upon the receipt of such a letter the patient must set forward for Bath, bringing with him this letter, the parish certificate duly executed, and allowed by two justices, and three pounds caution-money, if from any part of England or Wales; but if the patient comes from Scotland or Ireland, then the caution-money to be deposited before admission is the sum of five pounds.

"IV. Soldiers may, instead of parish certificates, bring a certificate from their commanding officers, signifying to what corps they belong,

[1] Ralph Allen (died 1764).

"Let humble Allen, with an awkward shame,
Do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame."

He is said to have been the Squire Allworthy of Fielding's "Tom Jones."

and that they shall be received into the same corps, when discharged from the Hospital, in whatever condition they are. But it is necessary that their cases be described and sent previously, and that they bring with them three pounds caution-money.

"Note.—The intention of the caution-money is to defray the expenses of returning the patients after they are discharged from the Hospital, or of their burial in case they die there. The remainder of the caution-money, after these expenses are defrayed, will be returned to the person who made the deposit."

I am unwilling to leave this subject of his benevolence, because it is a virtue in his character which must stand almost single against an hundred follies; and it deserves the more to be insisted on, because it was large enough to outweigh them all. A man may be a hypocrite safely in every other instance but in charity: there are few who will buy the character of benevolence at the rate for which it must be acquired. In short, the sums he gave away were immense; and in old age, when at last grown too poor to give relief, "*he gave*," as the poet has it,[1] "*all he had—a tear:*" when incapable of relieving the agonies of the wretched, he attempted to relieve his own by a flood of sorrow.

The sums he gave and collected for the hospital were great, and his manner of doing it was no less admirable. I am told that he was once collecting money in Wiltshire's room for that purpose, when a lady entered who is more remarkable for her wit than her charity, and, not being able to pass by him unobserved, she gave him a pat with her fan and said, "You must put down a trifle for me, Nash, for I have no money in my pocket." "Yes, madam," says he, "that I will with pleasure if your Grace will tell me when to stop;" then taking an handful of guineas out of his pocket, he began to tell them into his white hat—"One, two, three, four, five—" "Hold, hold!" says the Duchess, "consider what you are about." "Consider your rank and fortune, madam," says Nash, and continued telling—"six, seven, eight, nine, ten." Here the Duchess called again, and seemed angry. "Pray compose yourself, madam," cried Nash, "and don't interrupt the work of charity—eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen." Here the Duchess stormed and caught hold of his hand. "Peace, madam," says Nash; "you shall have your name written in letters of gold, madam, and upon the front of the building, madam. Sixteen, seventeen,

[1] Gray's "Elegy in a Country Church-yard."

eighteen, nineteen, twenty." "I won't pay a farthing more," says the Duchess. "Charity hides a multitude of sins," replies Nash. "Twenty-one, twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five." "Nash," says she, "I protest you frighten me out of my wits. L—d, I shall die!" "Madam, you will never die with doing good; and if you do, it will be the better for you," answered Nash, and was about to proceed; but perceiving her Grace had lost all patience, a parley ensued, when he, after much altercation, agreed to stop his hand, and compound with her Grace for thirty guineas. The Duchess, however, seemed displeased the whole evening, and when he came to the table where she was playing, bid him "stand farther, an ugly devil, for she hated the sight of him." But her Grace afterwards, having a run of good-luck, called Nash to her. "Come," says she, "I will be friends with you, though you are a fool; and, to let you see I am not angry, there is ten guineas more for your charity. But this I insist on, that neither my name nor the sum shall be mentioned."

From the hospital erected for the benefit of the poor it is an easy transition to the monuments erected by him in honor of the great. Upon the recovery of the Prince of Orange, by drinking the Bath waters, Nash caused a small obelisk, thirty feet high, to be erected in a grove near the Abbey church, since called Orange Grove. This prince's arms adorn the west side of the body of the pedestal. The inscription is on the opposite side, in the following words:

"In memoriam sanitatis Principi Auriaco Aquarum thermalium potu. Favente Deo, ovante Britannia, feliciter restitutæ, M.DCC.XXXIV." In English thus: "In memory of the happy restoration of the health of the Prince of Orange, through the favor of God, and to the great joy of Britain, by drinking the Bath waters. 1734."

I find it a general custom at all baths and spas to erect monuments of this kind to the memory of every prince who has received benefit from the waters. Aix, Spa, and Pisa abound with inscriptions of this nature, apparently doing honor to the prince, but in reality celebrating the efficacy of their springs. It is wrong, therefore, to call such monuments instances of gratitude, though they may wear that appearance.

In the year 1738 the Prince of Wales came to Bath, who presented Nash with a large gold enamelled snuffbox; and upon his departure Nash, as King of Bath, erected an obelisk in honor of this prince, as he had before done for the Prince of Orange. This handsome memorial in honor of that good-natured prince is erected in Queen Square.

It is enclosed with a stone balustrade, and in the middle of every side there are large iron gates. In the centre is the obelisk, seventy feet high, and terminating in a point. The expenses of this were eighty pounds; and Mr. Nash was determined that the inscription should answer the magnificence of the pile. With this view he wrote to Mr. Pope, requesting an inscription. I should have been glad to have given Nash's letter upon this occasion; the reader, however, must be satisfied with Pope's reply, which is as follows:

"Sir,—I have received yours, and thank your partiality in my favor. You say words cannot express the gratitude you feel for the favor of his R. H., and yet you would have me express what you feel, and in a few words. I own myself unequal to the task; for even granting it possible to express an inexpressible idea, I am the worst person you could have pitched upon for this purpose, who have received so few favors from the great myself that I am utterly unacquainted with what kind of thanks they like best. Whether the P—— most loves poetry or prose, I protest I do not know; but this I dare venture to affirm, that you can give him as much satisfaction in either as I can.

"I am, sir, your affectionate servant, A. Pope."[1]

What Mr. Nash's answer to this billet was I cannot take upon me to ascertain; but it was probably a perseverance in his former request. The following is the copy of Mr. Pope's reply to his second letter:

"Sir,—I had sooner answered yours, but in the hope of procuring a properer hand than mine; and then in consulting with some whose office about the P—— might make them the best judges what sort of inscription to set up. Nothing can be plainer than the enclosed; it is nearly the common-sense of the thing, and I do not know how to flourish upon it; but this you would do as well, or better, yourself, and I dare say may mend the expression.—I am truly, dear sir, your affectionate servant, A. Pope.

"I think I need not tell you my name should not be mentioned."

Such a letter as this was what might naturally be expected from Mr. Pope. Notwithstanding the seeming modesty towards the conclusion, the vanity of an applauded writer bursts through every line of

[1] This characteristic letter is not included in any edition of Pope.

it. The difficulty of concealing his hand[1] from the clerks at the post-office, and the solicitude to have his name concealed, were marks of the consciousness of his own importance.[2] It is probable his hand was not so very well known, nor his letters so eagerly opened, by the clerks of the office, as he seems always to think; but in all his letters, as well as in those of Swift, there runs a strain of pride, as if the world talked of nothing but themselves. "Alas," says he, in one of them, "the day after I am dead the sun will shine as bright as the day before, and the world will be as merry as usual!" Very strange, that neither an eclipse nor an earthquake should follow the loss of a poet!

The inscription referred to in this letter was the same which was afterwards engraved on the obelisk, and is as follows:

"In memory of honors bestowed,
and in gratitude for benefits conferred in
this city,
by his Royal Highness
Frederick, Prince of Wales,
and his Royal Consort,
in the year 1738,
this Obelisk is erected by
Richard Nash, Esq."

I dare venture to say there was scarce a common-councilman in the corporation of Bath but could have done this as well. Nothing can be more frigid, though the subject was worthy of the utmost exertions of genius.

About this period every season brought some new accession of honor to Nash; and the corporation now universally found that he was absolutely necessary for promoting the welfare of the city; so that this year seems to have been the meridian of his glory. About this time he arrived at such a pitch of authority, that I really believe Alexander was not greater at Persepolis. The countenance he received from the Prince of Orange, the favor he was in with the

[1] I think this is a mistake. It was common, when Pope wrote, to advertise books — Ovid's Epistles, etc. — as translated by the most eminent hands, and to this Pope alludes when he speaks, in his note to Nash, of "a properer hand."

[2] "It is evident that his own importance swells often in his mind. He is afraid of writing lest the clerks of the post-office should know his secrets. . . . All this while it was likely that the clerks did not know his hand."—JOHNSON, *Life of Pope.*

Prince of Wales, and the caresses of the nobility, all conspired to lift him to the utmost pitch of vanity. The exultation of a little mind, upon being admitted to the familiarity of the great, is inexpressible. The Prince of Orange had made him a present of a very fine snuff-box. Upon this some of the nobility thought it would be proper to give snuffboxes too; they were quickly imitated by the middling gentry, and it soon became the fashion to give Nash snuffboxes, who had in a little time a number sufficient to have furnished a good toy-shop.

To add to his honors, there was placed a full-length picture of him in Wiltshire's Ball-Room, between the busts of Newton and Pope. It was upon this occasion that the Earl of Chesterfield wrote the following severe but witty epigram:

"Immortal Newton never spoke
More truth than here you'll find,
Nor Pope himself e'er penn'd a joke
More cruel on mankind.

"The picture plac'd the busts between
Gives satire its full strength;
Wisdom and Wit are little seen,
But Folly at full length."[1]

[1] I find this epigram for the first time in print in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of February, 1741 (p. 102), and find what appears to be the original of it in a volume of poems by Jane Brereton, published in 1744. Jane Brereton's poem is as follows:

"The old Egyptians hid their wit
In hieroglyphic dress,
To give men pains to search for it,
And please themselves with guess.

"Moderns, to tread the self-same path,
And exercise our parts,
Place figures in a room at Bath—
Forgive them, God of Arts!

"Newton, if I can judge aright,
All Wisdom does express;
His knowledge gives mankind new light,
Adds to their happiness.

"Pope is the emblem of true Wit,
The sunshine of the mind;
Read o'er his works for proof of it,
You'll endless pleasure find.

There is also a full-length picture of Mr. Nash in Simpson's Ball-Room, and his statue at full-length in the Pump-Room, with a plan of the Bath Hospital in his hand. He was now treated in every respect like a great man; he had his levee, his flatterers, his buffoons, his good-natured creatures, and even his dedicators. A trifling, ill-supported vanity was his foible; and while he received the homage of the vulgar and enjoyed the familiarity of the great, he felt no pain for the unpromising view of poverty that lay before him: he enjoyed the world as it went, and drew upon content for the deficiencies of fortune. If a cringing wretch called him "his Honor," he was pleased, internally conscious that he had the justest pretensions to the title. If a beggar called him "my Lord," he was happy, and generally sent the flatterer off happy too. I have known him, in London, wait a whole day at a window in the Smyrna Coffee-House,[1] in order to receive a bow from the Prince, or the Duchess of Marlborough, as they passed by where he was standing, and he would then look round upon the company for admiration and respect.[2]

But perhaps the reader desires to know who could be low enough to flatter a man who himself lived in some measure by dependence. Hundreds are ready upon those occasions. The very needy are almost ever flatterers. A man in wretched circumstances forgets his own value, and feels no pain in giving up superiority to every claimant. The very vain are ever flatterers; as they find it necessary to make use of all their arts to keep company with such as are superior to themselves. But particularly the prodigal are prone to adulation, in order to open new supplies for their extravagance. The poor, the vain, and the extravagant are chiefly addicted to this vice, and such

"Nash represents man in the mass,
Made up of wrong and right;
Sometimes a knave, sometimes an ass,
Now blunt and now polite.

"The picture plac'd the busts between
Adds to the thought much strength;
Wisdom and Wit are little seen,
But Folly's at full length."

In the first edition of the "Life of Nash" Goldsmith had quoted only the last stanza; in the second edition the epigram appears as in the text.

[1] See Note in Vol. III., pp. 47, 173.

[2] Goldsmith is here describing what he could not possibly have witnessed. The Duchess died in 1744, and the Prince in 1751.

hung upon his good-nature. When these three characters are found united in one person, the composition generally becomes a great man's favorite. It was not difficult to collect such a group in a city that was the centre of pleasure. Nash had them of all sizes, from the half-pay captain in laced clothes to the humble boot-catcher at the Bear.

I have before me a bundle of letters, all addressed from a pack of flattering reptiles, to "his Honor," and even some printed dedications in the same servile strain. In these "his Honor" is complimented as the great encourager of the polite arts, as a gentleman of the most accomplished taste, of the most extensive learning, and, in short, of everything in the world. But perhaps it will be thought wrong in me to unveil the blushing muse, to brand learning with the meanness of its professors, or to expose scholars in a state of contempt. For the honor of letters, the dedications to Nash are not written by scholars or poets, but by people of a different stamp.

Among this number was the highwayman who was taken after attempting to rob and murder Dr. Hancock. He was called Poulter, *alias* Baxter, and published a book exposing the tricks of gamblers, thieves, and pickpockets. This he intended to have dedicated to Mr. Nash; but the generous patron, though no man loved praise more, was too modest to have it printed. However, he took care to preserve the manuscript among the rest of his papers. The book was entitled "The Discoveries of John Poulter, *alias* Baxter, who was apprehended for robbing Dr. Hancock of Salisbury, on Claverton Down, near Bath; and who has been admitted king's evidence, and discovered a most numerous gang of villains. Being a full account of all the robberies he committed, and the surprising tricks and frauds he has practised for the space of five years last past, in different parts of England, particularly in the west. Written wholly Himself."[1] The dedication intended to be prefixed is as follows, and will give a specimen of the style of a highwayman and a gambler:

"*To the Honorable* RICHARD NASH, *Esq.*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOR,—With humble submission I make bold to present the following sheets to your Honor's consideration and well-known humanity. As I am industriously careful, in respect to his Majesty and good subjects, to put an end to the unfortunate

[1] Published in 1761, in 8vo.

misconducts of all I know, by bringing them to the gallows. To be sure, some may censure, as if from self-preservation I made this ample discovery; but I communicate this to your Honor and gentry, whether the life of one person being taken away would answer the end, as to let escape such a number of villains, who has been the ruining of many a poor family, for whom my soul is now much concerned. If my inclinations were ever so roguish inclined, what is it to so great a number of villains, when they consult together. As your Honor's wisdom, humanity, and interest are the friend of the virtuous, I make bold to lay at your Honor's feet the following lines, which will put every honest man upon his defence against the snares of the mischievous; and am, with greatest gratitude, honored sir, your Honor's most truly devoted and obedient servant,

"JOHN POULTER, *alias* BAXTER.

"Taunton Jail, June 2d."

Flattery from such a wretch as this one would think but little pleasing; however, certain it is that Nash was pleased with it. He loved to be called "your Honor," and "Honorable," and the highwayman more than once experienced his generosity.

But since I have mentioned this fellow's book I cannot repress an impulse to give an extract from it, however foreign from my subject. I take the following picture to be a perfectly humorous description of artful knavery affecting ignorance on one hand, and rustic simplicity pretending to great wisdom and sagacity on the other. It is an account of the manner in which countrymen are deceived by gamblers, at a game called Pricking in the Belt, or the Old Nob. This is a leathern strop, folded up double, and then laid upon a table; if the person who plays with a bodkin pricks into the loop of the belt he wins; if otherwise he loses. However, by slipping one end of the strop, the sharper can win with pleasure.

There are generally four persons concerned in this fraud, one to personate a sailor, called a legbull, another called the capper, who always keeps with the sailor; and two pickers-up, or money-droppers, to bring in flats or bubbles. The first thing they do at a fair is to look for a room clear of company, which the sailor and capper immediately take, while the money-droppers go out to look for a flat. If they see a countryman whose looks they like, one drops a shilling or half a crown just before him, and picking it up again, looks the man in the face, and says, I have found a piece of money, friend; did you

see me pick it up? The man says, Yes; then says the sharper, If you had found it I would have had half, so I will do as I would be done unto; come, honest friend, we will not part with dry lips. Then taking him into the room where the other two are, he cries, By your leave, gentlemen, I hope we don't disturb the company. No, cries the sailor, no, brothers; will you drink a glass of brandy? I don't like your weak liquors; and then begins a discourse, by asking the capper how far it is to London; who replies, I don't know; perhaps the gentleman there can tell you, directing his discourse to the flat; perhaps the flat will answer, a hundred miles; the sailor cries, I can ride that in a day, ay, in four or five hours; for, says he, my horse will run twenty knots an hour for twenty-four hours together; capper, or the sailor's supposed companion, says, I believe, farmer, you have not got such a horse as the sailor has; the farmer cries, No, and laughs; and then the sailor says, I must go and get half a pint of brandy, for I am griped, and so leaves them. The capper, affecting a look of wisdom in his absence, observes, that it is an old saying, and a true one, that sailors get their money like horses, and spend it like asses; as for that there sailor, I never saw him till now, buying a horse of my man; he tells me he has been at sea, and has got about four hundred pounds prize-money, but I believe he will squander it all away, for he was gaming just now with a sharping fellow, and lost forty shillings at a strange game of pricking in a string. Did either of you ever see it, gentlemen? continued the capper; if you two are willing I will ask him to show it, for we may as well win some of his money as anybody else: the flat and the dropper cry, Do. Then in comes the sailor, staggering as if drunk, and cries, What cheer, brothers? I have just seen a pretty girl in the fair, and went in to drink with her; we made a bargain, and I gave her a six-and-thirty shilling piece, but an old b—h, her mother, came and called her away, but I hope she will come back to me presently; then the capper laughs and says, Have you got your money of her again? The sailor says, No; but she will come to me, I'm sure; then they all laugh. This is done to deceive the flat; then says the capper, What have you done with the stick and the string, sailor? he answers, What, that which I bought of the boys? I have got it here, but will not sell it; and then he pulls out the old nob, saying, What do you think I gave for it? I gave but sixpence and as much brandy as the two boys could drink; it is made out of a monkey's hide, as the boys told me, and they told me there is a game to be played at it which nobody can do twice

together; I will go down aboard ship and play with my captain, and I do not fear but I shall win his ship and cargo; then they all laugh, and the sailor makes up the old nob, and the capper lays a shilling, and pricks himself and wins; the sailor cries, You are a dab, I will not lay with you, but if you will call a stranger I will lay again. Why, if you think me a dab, I will get this strange gentleman, or this, pointing to the flat. Done, cries the sailor, but you shall not tell him; then he makes up the nob, and capper lays a shilling; flat pricks, being permitted to go sixpence; to which he agreeing, wins; and capper says to the flat, Can you change me half a crown? This is done to find the depth of his pocket; if they see a good deal of gold, flat must win three or four times; if no gold, but twice. Sometimes, if the flat has no money, the sailor cries, I have more money than any man in the fair, and pulls out his purse of gold, and saith, Not one of you can beg, borrow, or steal half this sum in an hour for a guinea. Capper cries, I have laid out all mine; farmer, can you? I'll go your halves, if you think you can do it. The sailor saith, You must not bring anybody with you; then the dropper goes with the flat, and saith, You must not tell your friend it is for a wager, if you do he will not lend it you. Flat goes and borrows it, and brings it to the sailor, shows it him, and wins the wager; then the sailor pinches the nob again, and the capper whispers to the flat, to prick out purposely this time, saying it will make the sailor more eager to lay on; we may as well win his money as not, for he will spend it upon whores. Flat, with all the wisdom in the world, loses on purpose, upon which the sailor swears, pulls out all his money, throws it about the room, and cries, I know no man can win forever, and then lays a guinea, but will not let him prick, but throws down five guineas, and the capper urging the flat, and going his halves, the sailor saith, My cabin-boy will lay as much as that; I'll lay no less than twenty guineas; the capper cries, Lay, farmer, and take up forty, which being certain of winning, he instantly complies with and loses the whole. When he has lost, in order to advise him, the dropper takes him by the arm and hauls him out-of-doors, and the reckoning being in the mean time paid within, the capper and sailor follow after and run another way. When they are out of sight the dropper saith to the flat, Go you back and play with the sailor for a shilling, whilst I go and borrow money; but when the flat goes to the house he finds them gone, and then he knows that he is bit, but not till he has dearly paid for it.

By this fellow's discoveries Mr. Nash was enabled to serve many of the nobility and gentry of his acquaintance: he received a list of all those houses of ill-fame which harbored or assisted rogues, and took care to furnish travellers with proper precautions to avoid them. It was odd enough to see a gamester thus employed in detecting the frauds of gamblers.

Among the Dedications there is one from a Professor of Cookery, which is even more adulatory than the preceding. It is prefixed to a work entitled "The Complete Preserver; or, a new method of preserving fruits, flowers, and other vegetables, either with or without sugar, vinegar, or spirits, etc."

"*To the very Honorable* RICHARD NASH, *Esq.*

"HONORED SIR,—As much as the oak exceeds the bramble, so much do you exceed the rest of mankind in benevolence, charity, and every other virtue that adorns, ennobles, and refines the human species. I have therefore made bold to prefix your name, though without permission, to the following work, which stands in need of such a patron, to excuse its errors, with a candor only known to such a heart as your own. The obligations I have received at your hands it is impossible for me ever to repay, except by my endeavors, as in the present case, to make known the many excellent virtues which you possess. But what can my wit do to recommend such a genius as yours? a single word, a smile from yourself, outweighs all that I, or perhaps the best of our poets, could express in writing, in the compass of a year. It would ill become my sex to declare what power you have over us; but your generosity is, even in this instance, greater than your desire to oblige. The following sheets were drawn up at my hours of leisure, and may be serviceable to such of my sex as are more willing to employ their time in laudable occupations and domestic economy, than in dress and dissipation. What reception they may receive from your Honor I am incapable of telling; however, from your known candor and humanity, I expect the most favorable.—I am, honored sir, your most obedient and obliged humble servant,

"H. W."

A musician in his dedication still exceeds the other two in adulation. However, though the matter may be some impeachment on his sincerity, the manner in which it is written reflects no disgrace upon his understanding:

"*To* RICHARD NASH, *Esq.*

"SIR,—The kind partiality of my friends prevailed with me to present to the world these my first attempts in musical composition; and the generous protection you have been pleased to afford me, makes it my indispensable duty to lay them at your feet. Indeed, to whom could I presume to offer them, but to the great encourager of all polite arts? for your generosity knows no bounds; nor are you more famed for that dignity of mind, which ennobles and gives a grace to every part of your conduct, than for that humanity and beneficence which makes you the friend and benefactor of all mankind. To you, the poor and the rich, the diseased and the healthy, the aged and the young, owe every comfort, every conveniency, and every innocent amusement, that the best heart, the most skilful management, and the most accomplished taste can furnish. Even this age, so deeply practised in all the subtleties of refined pleasure, gives you this testimony: even this age, so ardently engaged in all the ways of the most unbounded charity, gives you this praise. Pardon me, then, if, amidst the crowd of votaries, I make my humble offering, if I seize this first opportunity of publicly expressing the grateful sentiments of my own heart and profound respect, with which I am, sir, your most obliged, most devoted, and most obedient servant, J. G."

I fancy I have almost fatigued the reader, and I am almost fatigued myself, with the efforts of these elegant panegyrists; however, I cannot finish this run of quotation without giving a specimen of poetry addressed to him upon a certain occasion; and all I shall say in its defence is, that those who are pleased with the prose dedications will not dislike the present attempt in poetry:

"TO RICHARD NASH, ESQ., ON HIS SICKNESS AT TUNBRIDGE.

"Say, must the friend of human kind,
Of most refin'd—of most diffusive mind;
Must Nash himself beneath these ailments grieve?
He felt for all—he felt—but to relieve,
To heal the sick—the wounded to restore,
And bid desponding Nature mourn no more.
Thy quick'ning warmth, O let thy patron feel,
Improve thy springs with double power to heal:
Quick, hither, all-inspiring Health, repair,
And save the gay—and wretched from despair;

Thou only Esra's drooping sons canst cheer,
And stop the soft-ey'd virgin's trickling tear;
In murmurs who their Monarch's pains deplore;
While sickness faints, and pleasure is no more;
O let not Death with hasty strides advance;
Thou, mildest Charity, avert the lance;
His threatening power, celestial maid! defeat;
Nor take him with thee to thy well known seat;
Leave him on earth some longer date behind,
To bless, to polish, and relieve mankind;
Come, then, kind Health! O quickly come away,
Bid Nash revive—and all the world be gay."

Such addresses as these were daily offered to our titular King. When in the meridian of power, scarce a morning passed that did not increase the number of his humble admirers, and enlarge the sphere of his vanity.

The man who is constantly served up with adulation must be a first-rate philosopher if he can listen without contracting new affectations. The opinion we form of ourselves is generally measured by what we hear from others; and when they conspire to deceive, we too readily concur in the delusion. Among the number of much-applauded men in the circle of our own friends, we can recollect but few that have heads quite strong enough to bear a loud acclamation of public praise in their favor; among the whole list we shall scarce find one that has not thus been made, on some side of his character, a coxcomb.

When the best head turns and grows giddy with praise, is it to be wondered that poor Nash should be driven by it almost into a frenzy of affectation? Towards the close of life he became affected. He chiefly labored to be thought a sayer of good things; and by frequent attempts was now and then successful, for he ever lay upon the lurch.

There never, perhaps, was a more silly passion than this desire of having a man's jests recorded. For this purpose, it is necessary to keep ignorant or ill-bred company, who are only fond of repeating such stories; in the next place, a person must tell his own jokes, in order to make them more universal; but what is worst of all, scarcely a joke of this kind succeeds, but at the expense of a man's good-nature; and he who exchanges the character of being thought agreeable for that of being thought witty, makes but a very bad bargain.

The success Nash sometimes met with led him on, when late in life,

to mistake his true character. He was really agreeable, but he chose to be thought a wit: he therefore indulged his inclination, and never mattered how rude he was, provided he was thought comical. He thus got the applause he sought for; but too often found enemies where he least expected to find them. Of all the jests recorded of him, I scarcely find one that is not marked with petulance; he said whatever came uppermost, and in the number of his remarks it might naturally be expected that some were worth repeating; he threw often, and sometimes had a lucky cast.[1]

In a life of almost ninety years, spent in the very point of public view, it is not strange that five or six sprightly things of his have been collected, particularly as he took every opportunity of repeating them himself. His usual way, when he thought he said anything clever, was to strengthen it with an oath, and to make up its want of sentiment by asseveration and grimace. For many years he thus entertained the company at the Coffee-house with old stories, in which he always made himself the principal character. Strangers liked this well enough, but they who were used to his conversation found it insupportable. One story brought on another, and each came in the same order that it had the day preceding. But this custom may be rather ascribed to the peculiarity of age, than a peculiarity of charac-

[1] "For once bid business avaunt, and ask us how we do at Bath, and at your friend Graves's. We can offer you friendly conversation, friendly springs, friendly rides and walks, friendly pastimes to dissipate gloomy thoughts, friendly booksellers, who for five shillings for the season will furnish you with all the new books; friendly chairmen, who will carry you through storms and tempests for sixpence, and seldom else, for duchesses trudge the streets here unattended; we have also friendly Othellos, Falstaffs, Richard the Thirds, and Harlequins, who entertain one daily for half the price of your Garricks, Barrys, and Riches. And (what you will scarcely believe) we can also offer you friendly solitude, for one may be an anchoret here without being disturbed by the question, Why? Would you see the fortunate and benevolent Mr. Allen, his fine house, and his stone quarries? Would you see our law-giver, Mr. Nash, whose white hat commands more respect and non-resistance than the crowns of some kings, though now worn on a head that is in the eightieth year of its age? To promote society, good-manners, and a coalition of parties and ranks, to suppress scandal and late hours, are his views, and he succeeds rather better than his brother-monarchs generally do. Hasten, then, your steps, for he may be soon carried off the stage of life, as the greatest must fall to the worms' repast: yet he is new-hanging his collection of Beauties, so as to have space to hang up as many more future belles. His Apelles is Howard (in crayons); his Praxiteles is Howard's brother, who, though a statuary, deigns also to exercise his art in sculpture on humble paper-ceilings, which are very handsome." —Lady Luxborough, Orange Grove (Bath), February 29, 1752.

ter. It seldom happens that old men allure, at least by novelty: age, that shrivels the body, contracts the understanding; instead of exploring new regions, they rest satisfied in the old, and walk round the circle of their former discoveries. His manner of telling a story, however, was not displeasing; but few of those he told are worth transcribing. Indeed, it is the manner which places the whole difference between the wit of the vulgar and of those who assume the name of the polite: one has in general as much good-sense as the other; a story transcribed from the one will be as entertaining as that copied from the other; but in conversation the manner will give charms even to stupidity. The following is the story which he most frequently told, and pretty much in these words. Suppose the company to be talking of a German war, or Elizabeth Canning, he would begin thus: "I'll tell you something to that purpose that I fancy will make you laugh. A covetous old parson, as rich as the devil, scraped a fresh acquaintance with me several years ago at Bath. I knew him when he and I were students at Oxford, where we both studied damnationly hard; but that's neither here nor there. Well; very well. I entertained him at my house in John's Court—(no, my house in John's Court was not built then)—but I entertained him with all that the city could afford; the rooms, the music, and everything in the world. Upon his leaving Bath he pressed me very hard to return the visit, and desired me to let him have the pleasure of seeing me at his house in Devonshire. About six months after I happened to be in that neighborhood, and was resolved to see my old friend, from whom I expected a very warm reception. Well: I knocks at his door, when an old queer creature of a maid came to the door, and denied him. I suspected, however, that he was at home; and going into the parlor, what should I see but the parson's legs up the chimney, where he had thrust himself to avoid entertaining me. This was very well. 'My dear,' says I to the maid, 'it is very cold, extreme cold indeed, and I am afraid I have got a touch of my ague; light me the fire, if you please.' 'La! sir,' says the maid, who was a modest creature to be sure, 'the chimney smokes monstrously; you could not bear the room for three minutes together.' By the greatest good-luck there was a bundle of straw in the hearth, and I called for a candle. The candle came. 'Well, good woman,' says I, 'since you won't light me a fire, I'll light one for myself,' and in a moment the straw was all in a blaze. This quickly unkennelled the old fox; there he stood in an old rusty night-gown, blessing himself, and looking like—a—hem—egad."

He used to tell surprising stories of his activity when young.—"Here I stand, gentlemen, that could once leap forty-two feet upon level ground, at three standing jumps, backward or forward. One, two, three, dart like an arrow out of a bow. But I am old now. I remember I once leaped for three hundred guineas with Count Klopstock, the great leaper, leaping-master to the Prince of Passau; you must all have heard of him. First he began with a running jump, and a most damnable bounce it was, that's certain: everybody concluded that he had the match hollow; when, only taking off my hat, stripping off neither coat, shoes, nor stockings, mind me, I fetches a run, and went beyond him one foot, three inches and three-quarters, measured, upon my soul, by Captain Pately's own standard!"

But in this torrent of insipidity there sometimes were found very severe satire, strokes of true wit, and lines of humor, *cum fluerent lutulentus, etc.* He rallied very successfully; for he never felt another's joke, and drove home his own without pity. With his superiors he was familiar and blunt; the inferiority of his station secured him from their resentment; but the same bluntness which they laughed at was by his equals regarded as insolence—something like a familiar boot-catcher at an inn; a gentleman would bear that joke from him for which a brother boot-catcher would knock him down.

Among other stories of Nash's telling, I remember one, which I the more cheerfully repeat, as it tends to correct a piece of impertinence that reigns in almost every country assembly. The principal inhabitants of a certain market-town at a distance from the capital, in order to encourage that harmony which ought to subsist in society, and to promote a mutual intercourse between the sexes, so desirable to both and so necessary for all, had established a monthly assembly in the Town-hall, which was conducted with such decency, decorum, and politeness, that it drew the attention of the gentlemen and ladies in the neighborhood, and a nobleman and his family continually honored them with their presence. This naturally drew others, and in time the room was crowded with what the world calls good company; and the assembly prospered, till some of the newly admitted ladies took it into their heads that the tradesmen's daughters were unworthy of their notice, and therefore refused to join hands with them in the dance. This was complained of by the town ladies, and that complaint was resented by the country gentlemen; who, more pert than wise, publicly advertised that they would not dance with tradesmen's daughters. This the most eminent tradesmen considered as an insult

on themselves, and being men of worth, and able to live independently, they in return advertised that they would give no credit out of their town, and desired all others to discharge their accounts. A general uneasiness ensued; some writs were actually issued out, and much distress would have happened, had not my lord, who sided with no party, kindly interfered and composed the difference. The assembly, however, was ruined, and the families, I am told, are not friends yet, though this affair happened thirty years ago.

Nothing debases human nature so much as pride. This Nash knew, and endeavored to stifle every emotion of it at Bath. When he observed any ladies so extremely delicate and proud of a pedigree as to only touch the back of an inferior's hand in the dance, he always called to order, and desired them to leave the room or behave with common decency; and when any ladies and gentlemen drew off, after they had gone down a dance, without standing up till the dance was finished, he made up to them, and after asking whether they had done dancing, told them they should dance no more unless they stood up for the rest; and on these occasions he always was as good as his word.

Nash, though no great wit, had the art of sometimes saying rude things with decency, and rendering them pleasing by an uncommon turn. But most of the good things attributed to him, which have found their way into the jest-books, are no better than puns. The smartest things I have seen are against him. One day in the Grove he joined some ladies, and asking one of them, who was crooked, whence she came, she replied, "Straight from London." "Confound me, madam," said he, "then you must have been damnably warped by the way."

She soon, however, had ample revenge. Sitting the following evening in one of the rooms, he once more joined her company, and with a sneer and bow asked her if she knew her catechism, and could tell the name of Tobit's dog? "His name, sir, was Nash," replied the lady, "and an impudent dog he was." This story is told in a celebrated romance;[1] I only repeat it here to have an opportunity of observing that it actually happened.

Queen Anne once asked him why he would not accept of knighthood? To which he replied, lest Sir William Read, the mountebank, who had been just knighted, should call him brother.

[1] "Roderick Random."

A house in Bath was said to be haunted by the devil, and a great noise was made about it, when Nash, going to the minister of St. Michael's, entreated him to drive the devil out of Bath forever, if it were only to oblige the ladies.

Nash used sometimes to visit the great Doctor Clarke. The doctor was one day conversing with Locke and two or three more of his learned and intimate companions, with that freedom, gayety, and cheerfulness which is ever the result of innocence. In the midst of their mirth and laughter, the doctor, looking from the window, saw Nash's chariot stop at the door. "Boys, boys," cried the philosopher to his friends, "let us now be wise, for here is a fool coming."[1]

Nash was one day complaining in the following manner to the Earl of Chesterfield of his bad luck at play: "Would you think it, my lord, that damned bitch Fortune, no later than last night, tricked me out of five hundred? Is it not surprising," continued he, "that my luck should never turn—that I should thus eternally be mauled?" "I don't wonder at your losing money, Nash," said his lordship, "but all the world is surprised where you get it to lose."

Dr. Cheyne once, when Nash was ill, drew up a prescription for him, which was sent in accordingly. The next day the doctor coming to see his patient, found him up and well, upon which he asked if he had followed his prescription. "Followed your prescription!" cried Nash. "No! Egad, if I had I should have broke my neck, for I flung it out of the two-pair-of-stairs window."

It would have been well had he confined himself to such sallies; but as he grew old he grew insolent, and seemed, in some measure, insensible of the pain his attempts to be a wit gave others. Upon asking a lady to dance a minuet, if she refused he would often demand if she had got bandy legs. He would attempt to ridicule natural defects; he forgot the deference due to birth and quality, and mistook the manner of settling rank and precedence upon many occasions. He now seemed no longer fashionable among the present race of gentry; he grew peevish and fretful, and they, who only saw the remnant of a man, severely returned that laughter upon him which he had once lavished upon others.

Poor Nash was no longer the gay, thoughtless, idly-industrious creature he once was; he now forgot how to supply new modes of

[1] Boswell relates the same anecdote in his dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds of his "Life of Johnson."

entertainment, and became too rigid to wind with ease through the vicissitudes of fashion. The evening of his life began to grow cloudy. His fortune was gone, and nothing but poverty lay in prospect. To embitter his hopes, he found himself abandoned by the great, whom he had long endeavored to serve; and was obliged to fly to those of humbler stations for protection, whom he once affected to despise. He now began to want that charity which he had never refused to any; and to find that a life of dissipation and gayety is ever terminated by misery and regret.

Even his place of master of the ceremonies (if I can trust the papers he has left behind him) was sought after. I would willingly be tender of any living reputation, but these papers accuse Mr. Quin of endeavoring to supplant him. He has even left us a letter, which he supposed was written by that gentleman, soliciting a lord for his interest upon the occasion. As I choose to give Mr. Quin an opportunity of disproving this, I will insert the letter, and to show the improbability of its being his, with all its faults both of style and spelling. I am the less apt to believe it written by Mr. Quin, as a gentleman who has mended Shakspeare's plays so often would surely be capable of something more correct than the following. It was sent, as it should seem, from Mr. Quin to a nobleman, but left open for the perusal of an intermediate friend. It was this friend who sent a copy of it to Mr. Nash, who caused it to be instantly printed, and left among his other papers. The letter from the intermediate friend to Nash is as follows:

"London, Oct. 8, 1760.

"DEAR NASH,—Two posts ago I received a letter from Quin, the old player, covering one to my lord, which he left open for my perusal, which, after reading, he desired I might seal up and deliver. The request he makes is so extraordinary that it has induced me to send you the copy of his letter to my lord, which is as follows:

"'Bath, Oct. 3, 1760.

"'MY DER LORD,'[1]—Old Beaux Knash has mead himselfe so diss-

[1] Can any one who reads what precedes and what follows this letter suppose that we thought it was written by Mr. Quin, or that it would give any uneasiness either to him or his friends? The letter was really found among Mr. Nash's papers, as the editor can at any time prove, and it was inserted here to show what artifices were used by those who had more levity than good-nature to impose upon a poor old man, and to embitter his last moments. This note has been rendered necessary by a piece of criticism without candor, and an epigram without wit, which

agreeable to all the companey that comes here to Bath that the corperatian of this city have it now under thier consideration to remove him from beeing master of the cereymoines, should he be continuead the inhabitants of this city will be rueind, as the best companey declines to come to Bath on his acc^{t}. Give me leave to show to your Lords'hip how he beheaved at the firs't ball he had here thiss season which was Tus'day last. A younge Lady was as'ked to dance a minueat she begg the gent^{m} would be pleased to exquise here as' she did not chuse to dance; upon thiss' old Nash called out so as to be head by all the companey in the room, G— dam yo Madam, what buisness have you here if yo do not dance, upon which the Lady was so afrighted, she rose and danced, the ress'et of the companey was so much offended at the rudness of Nash that not one Lady more would dance a minueat that night. In country dances no person of note danced except two boys, Lords S—— and T—— the res't of the companey that danced waire only the families of all the haberdas'hers' machinukes and inkeepers in the three kingdoms brushed up and colected togither. I have known upon such an occaison as' thiss' seventeen Dutchess' and Contiss' to be at the opening of the ball at Bath now not one. This man by his' pride and extravagancis has outlived his' reasein it would be happy for thiss city that he was ded; and is now only fitt to reed Shirlock upon death by which he may seave his soul and gaine more than all the proffitts he can make, by his white hat suppose it was to be died red.[1] The fav^{r} I have now to reques't by what I now have wrote yo, is that your Lordship will speke to Mr. Pitt for to recommend me to the corporeatian of this city

appeared on this occasion in the public papers.—GOLDSMITH, note to second edition (not in first).

EPIGRAM.

To the Editor of "Nash's Life."

Think'st thou that Quin, whose parts and wit
Might any station grace,
Could e'er such ribald stuff have writ,
Or wished for Nash's place?

With scorn we read thy senseless trash,
And see thy toothless grin,
For Quin no more could sink to Nash,
Than thou canst rise to Quin.

The St. James Magazine [edited by Robert Lloyd], for 1762, vol. i. p. 130.

[1] Nash invariably wore a white hat. See his Epitaph, p. 138.

to succede this old sinner as master of the cerremonies, and yo will much oblige, My Lord, Your Lord^{s} and Hu^{e} Ob^{t} Serv^{t}.'

"N.B.—There were some other private matters and offers in Quin's letter to my lord, which do not relate to you."

Here Nash, if I may be permitted the use of a polite and fashionable phrase, was humm'd; but he experienced such rubs as these, and a thousand other mortifications, every day. He found poverty now denied him the indulgence not only of his favorite follies, but of his favorite virtues. The poor solicited him in vain, for he was himself a more pitiable object than they. The child of the public seldom has a friend, and he who once exercised his wit at the expense of others must naturally have enemies. Exasperated at last to the highest degree, an unaccountable whim struck him. Poor Nash was resolved to become an author; he who, in the vigor of manhood, was incapable of the task, now at the impotent age of eighty-six was determined to write his own history! From the many specimens already given of his style, the reader will not much regret that the historian was interrupted in his design. Yet, as Montaigne observes, as the adventures of an infant, if an infant could inform us of them, would be pleasing, so the life of a beau, if a beau could write, would certainly serve to regale curiosity.

Whether he really intended to put this design in execution, or did it only to alarm the nobility, I will not take upon me to determine; but certain it is that his friends went about collecting subscriptions for the work, and he received several encouragements from such as were willing to be politely charitable. It was thought by many that this history would reveal the intrigues of a whole age; that he had numberless secrets to disclose; but they never considered that persons of public character like him were the most unlikely in the world to be made partakers of those secrets which people desired the public should not know. In fact, he had few secrets to discover, and those he had are buried with him in the grave.

He was now past the power of giving or receiving pleasure, for he was poor, old, and peevish; yet still he was incapable of turning from his former manner of life to pursue happiness. The old man endeavored to practise the follies of the boy: he spurred on his jaded passions after every trifle of the day; tottering with age, he would be ever an unwelcome guest in the assemblies of the youthful and gay, and he seemed willing to find lost appetite among those scenes where he was once young.

An old man thus striving after pleasure is indeed an object of pity; but a man at once old and poor, running on in this pursuit, might excite astonishment. To see a being, both by fortune and constitution rendered incapable of enjoyment, still haunting those pleasures he was no longer to share in; to see one of almost ninety settling the fashion of a lady's cap, or assigning her place in a country-dance; to see him, unmindful of his own reverend figure, or the respect he should have for himself, toasting demireps, or attempting to entertain the lewd and idle—a sight like this might well serve as a satire on humanity; might show that man is the only preposterous creature alive who pursues the shadow of pleasure without temptation.

But he was not permitted to run on thus without severe and repeated reproof. The clergy sent him frequent calls to reformation; but the asperity of their advice in general abated its intended effects; they threatened him with fire and brimstone for what he had long been taught to consider as foibles, and not vices; so, like a desperate debtor, he did not care to settle an account that, upon the first inspection, he found himself utterly unable to pay.

Thus begins one of his monitors: "This admonition comes from your friend, and one that has your interest deeply at heart. It comes on a design altogether important, and of no less consequence than your everlasting happiness, so that it may justly challenge your careful regard. It is not to upbraid or reproach, much less to triumph or exult over your misconduct or misery; no, 'tis pure benevolence, it is disinterested good-will prompts me to write. I hope, therefore, I shall not raise your resentment. Yet, be the consequence what it will, I cannot bear to see you walk in the paths that lead to death without warning you of the danger—without sounding in your ear the awful admonition, 'Return and live! Why do you such things? I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.' I have long observed and pitied you, and must tell you plainly, sir, that your present behavior is not the way to reconcile yourself to God. You are so far from making atonement to offended justice, that each moment you are aggravating the future account, and heaping up an increase of his anger. As long as you roll on in a continued circle of sensual delights and vain entertainments, you are dead to all the purposes of piety and virtue. You are as odious to God as a corrupt carcass that lies putrefying in the church-yard. You are as far from doing your duty, or endeavoring after salvation, or restoring yourself to the Divine favor, as a heap of dry bones nailed up in a coffin is from

vigor and activity. Think, sir, I conjure you, think upon this, if you have any inclination to escape the fire that will never be quenched. Would you be rescued from the fury and fierce anger of God? Would you be delivered from weeping and wailing, and incessant gnashing of teeth? Sure you would! But be certain that this will never be done by amusements which at best are trifling and impertinent, and for that, if for no other reason, foolish and sinful. 'Tis by seriousness, 'tis by retirement and mourning, you must accomplish this great and desirable deliverance. You must not appear at the head of every silly diversion, you must enter into your closet and shut the door, commune with your own heart and search out its defects. The pride of life and all its superfluity of follies must be put away. You must make haste and delay not to keep every injunction of Heaven. You must always remember that mighty sinners must be mightily penitent or else mightily tormented. Your example and your projects have been extremely *prejudicial*—I wish I could not say *fatal* and *destructive*—to many. For this there is no amends but an alteration of your conduct as singular and remarkable as your person and name. If you do not by this method remedy in some degree the evils that you have sent abroad, and prevent the mischievous consequences that may ensue, wretched will you be, wretched above all men, to eternity. The blood of souls will be laid to your charge. God's jealousy, like a consuming flame, will smoke against you; as you yourself will see in that day, when the mountains shall quake, and the hills melt, and the earth be burnt up at his presence.

"Once more I exhort you as a friend; I beseech you as a brother; I charge you as a messenger from God in his own most solemn words, 'Cast away from you your transgressions, make you a new heart, and a new spirit; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.'

"Perhaps you may be disposed to contemn this and its serious purport, or to recommend it to your companions as a subject for raillery. Yet let me tell you beforehand that for this, as well as for other things, God will bring you to judgment. He sees me now I write. He will observe you while you read. He notes down my words; he will also note down your consequent procedure. Not then upon me—not upon me, but upon your own soul, will the neglecting or despising my sayings turn. 'If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.'"

Such repeated admonitions served to sting, without reforming him; they made him morose, but not pious. The dose was too strong for

the patient to bear. He should have been met with smiles, and allured into reformation, if, indeed, he was criminal. But, in the name of piety, what was there criminal in his conduct? He had long been taught to consider his trifling profession as a very serious and important business. He went through his office with great gravity, solemnity, and care; why, then, denounce peculiar torments against a poor harmless creature, who did a thousand good things, and whose greatest vice was vanity? He deserved ridicule, indeed, and he found it; but scarce a single action of his life, except one, deserves the asperity of reproach.

Thus we see a variety of causes concurred to embitter his departing life. The weakness and infirmities of exhausted nature; the admonitions of the grave, who aggravated his follies into vices; the ingratitude of his dependents, who formerly flattered his fortunes; but particularly the contempt of the great, many of whom quite forgot him in his wants; all these hung upon his spirit and soured his temper, and the poor man of pleasure might have terminated his life very tragically, had not the corporation of Bath charitably resolved to grant him ten guineas the first Monday of every month. This bounty served to keep him from actual necessity, though far too trifling to enable him to support the character of a gentleman. Habit, and not nature, makes almost all our wants; and he who had been accustomed in the early parts of life to affluence and prodigality, when reduced to a hundred and twenty-six pounds a year must pine in actual indigence.

In this variety of uneasiness his health began to fail. He had received from nature a robust and happy constitution, one, indeed, that was scarcely to be impaired by intemperance. He even pretended, among his friends, that he never followed a single prescription in the whole course of his life. However, in this he was one day detected on the parade; for boasting there of his contempt and utter disuse of medicine, unluckily the water of two blisters, which Dr. Oliver had prescribed, and which he then had upon each leg, oozed through his stockings and betrayed him. His aversion to physic, however, was frequently a topic of raillery between him and Dr. Cheyne, who was a man of some wit and breeding. When Cheyne recommended his vegetable diet, Nash would swear that his design was to send half the world grazing like Nebuchadnezzar. "Ay," Cheyne would reply, "Nebuchadnezzar was never such an infidel as thou art. It was but last week, gentlemen, that I attended this fellow in a fit of sickness;

there I found him rolling up his eyes to heaven and crying for mercy: he would then swallow my drugs like breast-milk; yet you now hear him, how the old dog blasphemes the faculty." What Cheyne said in jest was true; he feared the approaches of death more than the generality of mankind, and was usually very devout while it threatened him. Though he was somewhat the libertine in words, none believed or trembled more than he did; for a mind neither schooled by philosophy nor encouraged by conscious innocence is ever timid at the appearance of danger.

For some time before his decease nature gave warning of his approaching dissolution. The worn machine had run itself down to an utter impossibility of repair; he saw that he must die, and shuddered at the thought. His virtues were not of the great but the amiable kind; so that fortitude was not among the number. Anxious, timid, his thoughts still hanging on a receding world, he desired to enjoy a little longer that life, the miseries of which he had experienced so long. The poor unsuccessful gamester husbanded the wasting moments with an increased desired to continue the game, and to the last eagerly wished for one yet more happy throw. He died at his house in St. John's Court, Bath, on the 12th of February, 1761, aged eighty-seven years, three months, and some days.[1]

His death was sincerely regretted by the city, to which he had been so long and so great a benefactor. The day after he died the mayor called the corporation together, when they granted fifty pounds towards burying their sovereign with proper respect. After the corpse had lain four days, it was conveyed to the Abbey church in that city, with a solemnity somewhat peculiar to his character. About five the procession moved from his house; the charity-girls, two and two, preceded; next the boys of the charity-school, singing a solemn occasional hymn.[2] Next marched the city music and his own band, sound-

[1] This account of his age, which contradicts that given us by Doctor Oliver, was copied from Mr. Nash's own handwriting, by George Scott, Esq., from a book in the possession of Mr. Charles Morgan, at his coffee-house at Bath.—GOLDSMITH, note, first edition (not in second).

[2] THE HYMN SUNG AT HIS FUNERAL.

Most unhappy are we here,
Full of sin, and full of fear;
Ever weary, ne'er at rest,
When, O Lord, shall we be blest?

ing at proper intervals a dirge. Three clergymen immediately preceded the coffin, which was adorned with sable plumes, and the pall supported by the six senior aldermen. The masters of the assembly-rooms followed as chief mourners; the beadles of that hospital which he had contributed so largely to endow went next; and last of all, the poor patients themselves, the lame, the emaciated, and the feeble, followed their old benefactor to his grave, shedding unfeigned tears, and lamenting themselves in him.

The crowd was so great that not only the streets were filled, but, as one of the journals in a rant expresses it, "even the tops of the houses were covered with spectators. Each thought the occasion affected themselves most; as when a real king dies, they asked each other, 'Where shall we find such another?' Sorrow sate upon every face, and even children lisped that their sovereign was no more. The awfulness of the solemnity made the deepest impression on the minds of the distressed inhabitants. The peasant discontinued his toil, the ox rested from the plough; all nature seemed to sympathize with their loss, and the muffled bells rung a peal of bob-majors."

Our deepest solemnities have something truly ridiculous in them. There is somewhat ludicrous in the folly of historians, who thus declaim upon the death of kings and princes, as if there was anything dismal or anything unusual in it. "For my part," says Poggi, the Florentine, "I can no more grieve for another's death than I could for my own. I have ever regarded death as a very trifling affair, nor can

Earth's a clog, a pageant life,
Fill'd with folly, guilt, and strife;
Till we all unite in thee,
With ourselves we disagree.

What's our comfort here below?
Empty bubble, transient show;
Wrapt in the body's vile disguise,
None truly is until he dies.

Here we dwell, but not at home,
To other worlds ordain'd to roam;
Yet still we seek for joys that waste,
Fleeting as the vernal blast.

Lord, remove these shadows hence,
Give us faith instead of sense;
Teach us here in life to die,
That we may live eternally.—GOLDSMITH.

black staves, long cloaks, or mourning-coaches in the least influence my spirits. Let us live here as long and as merrily as we can, and when we must die, why, let us die merrily too, but die so as to be happy."

The few things Nash was possessed of were left to his relations. A small library of well-chosen books, some trinkets and pictures, were his only inheritance. Among the latter (besides the box given him by the Prince of Wales) were a gold box, which was presented to him by the late Countess of Burlington, with Lady Euston's picture in the lid, an *étui*, mounted in gold, with a diamond to open it, and ornamented with another diamond at the top, given him by the Princess Dowager of Wales. He had also a silver terene, which was given him by the Princess Amelia; and some other things of no great value. The rings, watches, and pictures which he formerly received from others would have come to a considerable amount; but these necessity had obliged him to dispose of. Some family pictures, however, remained, which were sold by advertisement for five guineas each, after Mr. Nash's decease.[1]

It was natural to expect that the death of a person so long in the eye of the public must have produced a desire in several to delineate his character, or deplore his loss. He was scarcely dead when the public papers were filled with elegies, groans, and characters; and before he was buried there were epitaphs ready-made to inscribe on his stone. I remember one of those character writers, and a very grave one, too, after observing, alas! that Richard Nash, Esq., was no more, went on to assure us that he was "sagacious, *debonair*, and *commode*;" and concluded with gravely declaring that "impotent posterity would in vain fumble to produce his fellow." Another, equally sorrowful, gave us to know "that he was indeed a man;" an assertion which I fancy none will be so hardy as to contradict. But the merriest of all the lamentations made upon this occasion was that where he is called "a constellation of the heavenly sphere."

One thing, however, is common almost with all of them, and that

[1] "All persons who have any demands on the estate of Richard Nash, late of the city of Bath, Esq., deceased, or that have any of his effects deposited by him by way of security for moneys borrowed or otherwise, in their hands, are desired to send an account thereof to Mr. William Yescombe, attorney, in Bath. And all persons indebted to the said estate are required to pay the same to the said Mr. Yescombe, who is empowered by the administrator of the said Mr. Nash to receive the debts due to his estate."—*The London Gazette*, March 17–21, 1761.

is, that Venus, Cupid, and the Graces are commanded to weep;[1] and that Bath shall never find such another.

But, though he was satirized with the praises of those, there were some of real abilities who undertook to do justice to his character, to praise him for his virtues, and acknowledge his faults. I need scarcely mention that Dr. Oliver[2] and Dr. King[3] are of this number. They had honored him with their friendship while living, and undertook to honor his memory when dead. As the reader may choose to compare their efforts on the same subject, I have subjoined them, and perhaps many will find in either enough, upon so unimportant a subject as Mr. Nash's life, to satisfy curiosity. The first published was that by Dr. Oliver, written with much good-sense and still more good-nature. But the reader will consider that he has assumed in his motto the character of a panegyrist, and spares his friend's faults, though he was too candid entirely to pass them over in silence:

A FAINT SKETCH OF THE LIFE, CHARACTER, AND MANNERS OF THE LATE MR. NASH.[4]

Imperium in Imperio. ——
De mortuis nil nisi bonum.

Bath, February 13, 1761.

This morning died
RICHARD NASH, Esq.,
Aged eighty-eight.
He was by birth a gentleman, an ancient Briton;
By education, a student of Jesus College, in Oxford;
By profession
His natural genius was too volatile for any.
He tried the army and the law;
But soon found his mind superior to both—
He was born to govern,

[1] "Alas! he is gone, and the city can tell
How in years and in glory lamented he fell;
Him mourn'd all the Dryads on Claverton's mount;
Him Avon deplor'd, him the nymph of the Fount."—ANSTEY.

[2] Dr. William Oliver, the friend and occasionally the correspondent of Pope, died at Bath in 1764.

[3] Dr. William King, author of "The Toast," a political satire, died 30th of December, 1763.

[4] "Bath: Printed for John Keene, in King's Mead Street, and sold by W. Kingston, on Trim Bridge."

Nor was his dominion, like that of other legislators,
Over the servility of the vulgar,
But over the pride of the noble and the opulent.
His public character was great,
As it was self-built and self-maintained:
His private amiable,
As it was grateful, beneficent, and generous.
By the force of genius
He erected the city of Bath into a province of pleasure,
And became, by universal consent,
Its legislator and ruler.
He plann'd, improv'd, and regulated all the amusements of the place;
His fundamental law was, that of good-breeding;
Hold sacred decency and decorum,
His constant maxim:
Nobody, howsoever exalted
By beauty, blood, titles, or riches,
Could be guilty of a breach of it, unpunished—
The penalty, his disapprobation and public shame.
To maintain the sovereignty he had established,
He published Rules of behaviour,
Which, from their propriety, acquired the force of laws;
And which the highest never infringed, without immediately undergoing the public censure.
He kept the Men in order; most wisely,
By prohibiting the wearing swords in his dominions;
By which means
He prevented sudden passion from causing
The bitterness of unavailing repentance.
In all quarrels he was chosen Umpire—
And so just were his decisions,
That peace generally triumphed,
Crowned with the mutual thanks of both parties.
He kept the Ladies in good-humour; most effectually,
By a nice observance of the rules of place and precedence;
By ordaining scandal to be the infallible mark
Of a foolish head and a malicious heart,
Always rendering more suspicious
The reputation of her who propagated it,
Than that of the person abused.

Of the young, the gay, the heedless fair,
Just launching into the dangerous sea of pleasure,
He was ever, unsolicited (sometimes unregarded),
The kind protector:
Humanely correcting even their mistakes in dress,
As well as improprieties in conduct:
Nay, often warning them,
Though at the hazard of his life,
Against the artful snares of designing men,
Or an improper acquaintance with women of doubtful characters.
Thus did he establish his government on pillars
Of honour and politeness,
Which could never be shaken:
And maintained it for full half a century,
With reputation, honour, and undisputed authority,
Beloved, respected, and revered.
Of his private character, be it the first praise,
That while, by his conduct, the highest ranks became his subjects,
He himself became
The servant of the poor and the distressed:
Whose cause he ever pleaded amongst the rich,
And enforced with all the eloquence of a good example:
They were ashamed not to relieve those wants
To which they saw him administer with
So noble an heart, and so liberal an hand.
Nor was his munificence confined to particulars,
He being, to all the public charities of this city,
A liberal benefactor;
Not only by his own most generous subscriptions,
But, by always assuming, in their behalf, the character of
A sturdy beggar;
Which he performed with such an authoritative address
To all ranks, without distinction,
That few of the worst hearts had courage to refuse,
What their own inclinations would not have prompted them to bestow.

Of a noble public spirit
And
A warm, grateful heart
The obelisk in the grove,

And
The beautiful needle in the square,
Are magnificent testimonies.

The One
Erected to preserve the memory of a
Most interesting event to his country,
The restitution of health, by the healing waters of this place,
To the illustrious Prince of Orange,
Who came hither in a most languishing condition:

The Other,
A noble offering of thanks
To the late Prince of WALES, and his royal Consort,
For favours bestowed,
And honours by them conferred, on this city.

His long and peaceful reign, of
Absolute power,
Was so tempered by his
Excessive good-nature,
That no instance can be given either of his own cruelty,
Or of his suffering that of others to escape
Its proper reward.
Example unprecedented amongst absolute monarchs.

READER.

This monarch was a man,
And had his foibles and his faults;
Which we would wish covered with the veil of good-nature,
Made of the same piece with his own:
But, truth forceth us unwillingly to confess,
His passions were strong;
Which, as they fired him to act strenuously in good,
Hurried him to some excesses of evil.

His fire, not used to be kept under by an early restraint,
Burst out too often into flaming acts,
Without waiting for the cool approbation of his judgment.
His generosity was so great,

That Prudence often whispered him, in vain,
That she feared it would enter the neighboring confines of profusion:
His charity so unbounded,
That the severe might suspect it sometimes to be
The offspring of folly, or ostentation.

With all these,
Be they foibles, follies, faults, or frailties,
It will be difficult to point out,
Amongst his cotemporary Kings of the whole earth,
More than ONE
Who hath fewer, or less pernicious to mankind.

His existence
(For life it scarcely can be called)
Was spun out to so great an age, that
The man
Was sunk, like many former heroes, in
The weakness and infirmities of exhausted nature;
The unwilling tax all animals must pay
For multiplicity of days.
Over his closing scene,
Charity long spread her all-covering mantle,
And dropped the curtain,
Before the poor actor, though he had played his part,
Was permitted to quit the stage.

Now may she protect his memory!
Every friend of Bath,
Every lover of decency, decorum, and good-breeding,
Must sincerely deplore
The loss of so excellent a governor;
And join in the most fervent wishes (would I could say hopes!)
That there may soon be found a man
Able and worthy
To succeed him.

The reader sees in what alluring colors Nash's character is drawn; but he must consider that an intimate friend held the pencil; the Doctor professes to say nothing of the dead but what was good; and

such a maxim, though it serves his departed friend, is but badly calculated to improve the living. Dr. King, in his Epitaph, however, is still more indulgent; he produces him as an example to kings, and prefers his laws even to those of Solon or Lycurgus:

EPITAPHIUM RICHARDI NASH, ARMIGERI.

H. S. E.

RICHARDUS NASH,

Obscuro loco natus,
Et nullis ortus majoribus:
Cui tamen
(O rem miram, et incredibilem!)
Regnum opulentissimum florentissimumque
Plebs, proceres, principes,
Liberis suis suffragiis
Ultrò detulerunt,
Quod et ipse summâ cum dignitate tenuit,
Annos plus quinquaginta,
Universo populo consentiente, approbante, plaudente.

Una voce præterea, unoque omnium ordinum consensu,
Ad imperium suum adjuncta est
Magni nominis[1] Provincia:
Quam admirabili consilio et ratione
Per se, non unquam per legatos, administravit;
Eam quotannis invisere dignatus,
Et apud provinciales, quoad necesse fuit,
Solitus manere.

In tantâ fortunâ
Neque fastu turgidus Rex incessu patuit,
Neque, tyrannorum more, se jussit coli,
Aut amplos honores, titulosque sibi arrogavit;
Sed cuncta insignia, etiam regium diadema rejiciens,
Caput contentus fuit ornare
Galero Albo,
Manifesto animi sui candoris signo.

[1] Tunbridge.

Legislator prudentissimus,
Vel Solone et Lycurgo illustrior,
Leges, quascunque voluit,
Statuit, fixit, promulgavit;
Omnes quidem cùm civibus suis,
Tum verò hospitibus, advenis, peregrinis
Gratas, jucundas, utiles.

Voluptatum arbiter et minister,
Sed gravis, sed elegans, sed urbanus,
Et in summâ comitate satìs adhibens severitatis,
Imprimis curavit,
Ut in virorum et fœminarum cœtibus
Nequis impudenter faceret,
Neque in iis quod inesset
Impuritatis, clamoris, tumulti.

Civitatem hanc celeberrimam,
Delicias suas,
Non modò pulcherrimis ædificiis auxit,
Sed præclarâ disciplinâ et moribus ornavit:
Quippe nemo quisquam
To Prepon melius intellexit, excoluit, docuit.

Justus, liberalis, benignus, facetus,
Atque amicus omnibus præcipuè miseris et egenis,
Nullos habuit inimicos,
Præter magnos quosdam ardeliones,
Et declamatores eos tristes et fanaticos,
Qui generi humano sunt inimicissimi.

Pacis et patriæ amans,
Concordiam, felicem et perpetuam,
In regno suo constituit,
Usque adeò,
Ut nullus alteri petulanter maledicere,
Aut facto nocere auderet;
Neque, tanquam sibi metuens,
In publicum armatus prodire.

Fuit quanquam potentissimus,
Omnia arbitrio suo gubernans:
Haud tamen ipsa libertas
Magis usquam floruit
Gratiâ, gloriâ, auctoritate.
Singulare enim temperamentum invenit,
(Rem magnæ cogitationis,
Et rerum omnium fortasse difficillimam)
Quo ignobiles cum nobilibus, pauperes cum divitibus,
Indocti cum doctissimis, ignavi cum fortissimis
Æquari se putarent,
Rex Omnibus Idem.

Quicquid Peccaverit,
(Nam peccamus omnes)
In seipsum magis, quàm in alios,
Et errore, aut imprudentiâ magis quam scelere, aut improbitate,
Peccavit;
Nusquam verò ignoratione decori, aut honesti,
Neque ità quidem usquam,
Ut non veniam ab humanis omnibus
Facilè impetrârit.

Hujus vitæ morumque exemplar
Si cæteri reges, regulique,
Et quotquot sunt regnorum præfecti,
Imitarentur;
(Utinam! iterumque utinam!)
Et ipsi essent beati,
Et cunctæ orbis regiones beatissimæ.

Talem virum, tantumque ademptum
Lugeant musæ, charitesque!
Lugeant Veneres, Cupidinesque!
Lugeant omnes juvenum et nympharum chori!
Tu verò, O Bathonia,
Ne cesses tuum lugere
Principem, præceptorem, amicum, patronum;
Heu, heu, nunquam posthàc
Habitura parem!

The following translation of this Epitaph will give the English reader an idea of its contents, though not of its elegance:

THE EPITAPH OF RICHARD NASH, ESQ.

Here lies
RICHARD NASH,
Born in an obscure village,
And from mean ancestors,
To whom, however,
Strange to relate,
Both the vulgar and the mighty,
Without bribe or compulsion,
Unanimously gave
A kingdom, equally rich and flourishing.
A kingdom which he governed
More than fifty years,
With universal approbation and applause.

To his empire also was added,
By the consent of all orders,
A celebrated province[1]
Which he ever swayed with great prudence,
Not by delegated power, but in person.
He deigned to visit it every year,
And while the necessities of state demanded his presence,
He usually continued there.

In such greatness of fortune
His pride discovered itself by no marks of dignity;
Nor did he ever claim the honors of prostration.
Despising at once titles of adulation,
And laying aside all royal splendor,
Wearing not even the diadem,
He was content with being distinguish'd
Only by the ornamental ensign
Of a white hat;
A symbol of the candor of his mind.

[1] Tunbridge.

He was a most prudent legislator,
A more remarkable even than Solon or Lycurgus.
He at once established and authorized
Whatever laws were thought convenient,
Which were equally serviceable to the city,
And grateful to strangers,
Who made it their abode.

He was at once a provider and a judge of pleasures,
But still conducted them with gravity and elegance,
And repressed licentiousness with severity.
His chief care was employed,
In preventing obscenity or impudence
From offending the modesty or the morals
Of the Fair Sex,
And in banishing from their Assemblies
Tumult, clamor, and abuse.

He not only adorned this city,
Which he loved,
With beautiful structures,
But improved it by his example;
As no man knew, no man taught, what was becoming
Better than he.

He was just, liberal, kind, and facetious,
A friend to all, but particularly to the poor.
He had no enemies,
Except some of the trifling great,
Or dull declaimers, foes to all mankind.

Equally a lover of peace and of his country;
He fix'd a happy and lasting concord
In his kingdom,
So that none dare convey scandal, or injure by open violence
The universal peace,
Or even by carrying arms appear prepared for war
With impunity.

But though his power was boundless,
Yet never did liberty flourish more, which he promoted,

Both by his authority, and cultivated for his fame.
He found out the happy secret
(A thing not to be considered without surprise)
Of uniting the vulgar and the great,
The poor and the rich,
The learned and ignorant,
The cowardly and the brave,
In the bonds of society, an equal king to all.

Whatever his faults were,
For we have all faults,
They were rather obnoxious to himself than others;
They arose neither from imprudence nor mistake,
Never from dishonesty or corrupt principle;
But so harmless were they,
That though they failed to create our esteem,
Yet can they not want our pardon.

Could other kings and governors
But learn to imitate his example,
(Would to heaven they could!)
Then might they see themselves happy,
And the people still enjoying more true felicity.

Ye Muses and Graces mourn
His death;
Ye powers of Love, ye choirs of youth and virgins,
But thou, O Bathonia! more than the rest,
Cease not to weep,
Your king, your teacher, patron, friend,
Never, ah, never, to behold
His equal.

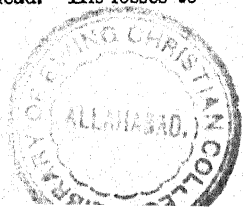
Whatever might have been justly observed of Mr. Nash's superiority as a governor, at least it may be said that few contemporary kings have met with such able panegyrists. The former enumerates all his good qualities with tenderness, and the latter enforces them with impetuosity. They both seem to have loved him, and honorably paid his remains the last debt of friendship. But a cool biographer, unbiassed by resentment or regard, will probably find nothing in the

man either truly great or strongly vicious. His virtues were all amiable, and more adapted to procure friends than admirers; they were more capable of raising love than esteem. He was naturally endued with good-sense; but, by having been long accustomed to pursue trifles, his mind shrunk to the size of the little objects on which it was employed. His generosity was boundless, because his tenderness and his vanity were in equal proportion; the one impelling him to relieve misery, and the other to make his benefactions known. In all his actions, however virtuous, he was guided by sensation and not by reason; so that the uppermost passion was ever sure to prevail.

His being constantly in company had made him an easy though not a polite companion. He chose to be thought rather an odd fellow than a well-bred man; perhaps that mixture of respect and ridicule with which his mock royalty was treated first inspired him with this resolution. The foundations of his empire were laid in vicious compliance, the continuance of his reign was supported by a virtuous impartiality. In the beginning of his authority he in reality obeyed those whom he pretended to govern; towards the end he attempted to extort a real obedience from his subjects, and supported his right by prescription. Like a monarch Tacitus talks of, they complied with him at first because they loved, they obeyed at last because they feared him. He often led the rich into new follies, in order to promote the happiness of the poor, and served the one at the expense of the other. Whatever his vices were, they were of use to society; and this neither Petronius, nor Apicius, nor Tigellius, nor any other professed voluptuary could say. To set him up, as some do, for a pattern of imitation is wrong, since all his virtues received a tincture from the neighboring folly; to denounce peculiar judgments against him is equally unjust, as his faults raise rather our mirth than our detestation. He was fitted for the station in which fortune placed him. It required no great abilities to fill it, and few of great abilities but would have disdained the employment. He led a life of vanity, and long mistook it for happiness. Unfortunately, he was taught at last to know that a man of pleasure leads the most unpleasant life in the world.

*A Letter from Mr. ***, in Tunbridge, to Lord *****, in London, found among the papers of Mr. Nash, and prepared by him for the Press.*

"My Lord,—What I foresaw has arrived; poor Jenners, after losing all his fortune, has shot himself through the head. His losses to



Bland were considerable, and his playing soon after with Spedding contributed to hasten his ruin. No man was ever more enamored of play, or understood it less. At whatever game he ventured his money, he was most usually the dupe, and still foolishly attributed to his bad luck those misfortunes that entirely proceeded from his want of judgment.

"After finding that he had brought on himself irreparable indigence and contempt, his temper, formerly so sprightly, began to grow gloomy and unequal: he grew more fond of solitude, and more liable to take offence at supposed injuries; in short, for a week before he shot himself, his friends were of opinion that he meditated some such horrid design. He was found in his chamber fallen on the floor, the bullet having glanced on the bone and lodged behind his right eye.

"You remember, my lord, what a charming fellow this deluded man was once. How benevolent, just, temperate, and every way virtuous; the only faults of his mind arose from motives of humanity: he was too easy, credulous, and good-natured, and unable to resist temptation, when recommended by the voice of friendship. These foibles the vicious and the needy soon perceived, and what was at first a weakness they soon perverted into guilt; he became a gamester, and continued the infamous profession till he could support the miseries it brought with it no longer.

"I have often been not a little concerned to see the first introduction of a young man of fortune to the gaming-table. With what eagerness his company is courted by the whole fraternity of sharpers; how they find out his most latent wishes, in order to make way to his affections by gratifying them, and continue to hang upon him with the meanest degree of condescension. The youthful dupe, no way suspecting, imagines himself surrounded by friends and gentlemen; and incapable of even suspecting that men of such seeming good-sense and so genteel an appearance should deviate from the laws of honor, walks into the snare, nor is he undeceived till schooled by the severity of experience.

"As I suppose no man would be a gamester unless he hoped to win, so I fancy it would be easy to reclaim him, if he was once effectually convinced that by continuing to play he must certainly lose. Permit me, my lord, to attempt this task, and to show that no young gentleman, by a year's run of play, and in a mixed company, can possibly be a gainer.

"Let me suppose, in the first place, that the chances on both sides

are equal—that there are no marked cards, no pinching, shuffling, nor hiding; let me suppose that the players also have no advantage of each other in point of judgment, and still further let me grant that the party is only formed at home, without going to the usual expensive places of resort frequented by gamesters. Even with all these circumstances in the young gamester's favor, it is evident he cannot be a gainer. With equal players, after a year's continuance of any particular game it will be found that, whatever has been played for, the winnings on either side are very inconsiderable, and most commonly nothing at all. Here, then, is a year's anxiety, pain, jarring, and suspense, and nothing gained; were the parties to sit down and professedly play for nothing, they would contemn the proposal; they would call it trifling away time, and one of the most insipid amusements in nature; yet, in fact, how do equal players differ? It is allowed that little or nothing can be gained, but much is lost; our youth, our time, those moments that may be laid out in pleasure or improvement, are foolishly squandered away in tossing cards, fretting at ill-luck, or, even with a run of luck in our favor, fretting that our winnings are so small.

"I have now stated gaming in that point of view in which it is alone defensible, as a commerce carried on with equal advantage and loss to either party, and it appears that the loss is great, and the advantage but small. But let me suppose the players not to be equal, but the superiority of judgment in our own favor. A person who plays under this conviction, however, must give up all pretensions to the approbation of his own mind, and is guilty of as much injustice as the thief who robbed a blind man because he knew he could not swear to his person.

"But, in fact, when I allowed the superiority of skill on the young beginner's side, I only granted an impossibility. Skill in gaming, like skill in making a watch, can only be acquired by long and painful industry. The most sagacious youth alive was never taught at once all the arts and all the niceties of gaming. Every passion must be schooled by long habit into caution and phlegm; the very countenance must be taught proper discipline; and he who would practise this art with success must practise on his own constitution all the severities of a martyr, without any expectation of the reward. It is evident, therefore, every beginner must be a dupe, and can only be expected to learn his trade by losses, disappointments, and dishonor.

"If a young gentleman, therefore, begins to game, the commence-

ments are sure to be to his disadvantage; and all that he can promise himself is, that the company he keeps, though superior in skill, are above taking advantage of his ignorance, and unacquainted with any sinister arts to correct fortune. But this, however, is but a poor hope at best, and, what is worse, most frequently a false one. In general, I might almost have said always, those who live by gaming are not beholden to chance alone for their support, but take every advantage which they can practise without danger of detection. I know many are apt to say, and I have once said so myself, that after I have shuffled the cards it is not in the power of a sharper to pack them; but at present I can confidently assure your lordship that such reasoners are deceived. I have seen men, both in Paris, the Hague, and London, who, after three deals, could give whatever hands they pleased to all the company. However, the usual way with sharpers is to correct fortune thus but once in a night, and to play in other respects without blunder or mistake, and a perseverance in this practice always balances the year in their favor.

"It is impossible to enumerate all the tricks and arts practised upon cards; few but have seen those bungling, poor fellows who go about at coffee-houses perform their clumsy feats, and yet, indifferently as they are versed in the trade, they often deceive us; when such as these are possessed of so much art, what must not those be who have been bred up to gaming from their infancy, whose hands are not, like those mentioned above, rendered callous by labor, who have continual practice in the trade of deceiving, and where the eye of the spectator is less upon its guard?

"Let the young beginner only reflect by what a variety of methods it is possible to cheat him, and perhaps it will check his confidence. His antagonists may act by signs and confederacy, and this he can never detect; they may cut to a particular card after three or four hands have gone about, either by having that card pinched or broader than the rest, or by having an exceeding fine wire thrust between the folds of the paper, and just peeping out at the edge. Or the cards may be chalked with particular marks, which none but the sharper can understand, or a new pack may be slipped in at a proper opportunity. I have known myself, in Paris, a fellow thus detected with a tin case, containing two packs of cards, concealed within his shirt-sleeve, and which, by means of a spring, threw the cards ready packed into his hands. These and an hundred other arts may be practised with impunity and escape detection.

"The great error lies in imagining every fellow with a laced coat to be a gentleman. The address and transient behavior of a man of breeding are easily acquired, and none are better qualified than gamesters in this respect. At first their complaisance, civility, and apparent honor is pleasing, but, upon examination, few of them will be found to have their minds sufficiently stored with any of the more refined accomplishments which truly characterize the man of breeding. This will commonly serve as a criterion to distinguish them, though there are other marks which every young gentleman of fortune should be apprised of. A sharper, when he plays, generally handles and deals the cards awkwardly like a bungler; he advances his bets by degrees, and keeps his antagonist in spirits by small advantages and alternate success at the beginning; to show all his force at once would but fright the bird he intends to decoy; he talks of honor and virtue, and his being a gentleman, and that he knows great men, and mentions his coal-mines, and his estate in the country; he is totally divested of that masculine confidence which is the attendant of real fortune; he turns, yields, assents, smiles, as he hopes will be most pleasing to his destined prey; he is afraid of meeting a shabby acquaintance, particularly if in better company; as he grows richer he wears finer clothes; and if ever he is seen in an undress, it is most probable he is without money; so that seeing a gamester growing finer each day is a certain symptom of his success.

"The young gentleman who plays with such men for considerable sums is sure to be undone, and yet we seldom see even the rook himself make a fortune. A life of gaming must necessarily be a life of extravagance; parties of this kind are formed in houses where the whole profits are consumed; and while those who play mutually ruin each other, they only who keep the house or the table acquire fortunes. Thus gaming may readily ruin a fortune, but has seldom been found to retrieve it. The wealth which has been acquired with industry and hazard, and preserved for ages by prudence and foresight, is swept away on a sudden; and when a besieging sharper sits down before an estate, the property is often transferred in less time than the writings can be drawn to secure the possession. The neglect of business, and the extravagance of a mind which has been taught to covet precarious possession, brings on premature destruction; though poverty may fetch a compass and go somewhat about, yet will it reach the gamester at last; and though his ruin be slow, yet it is certain.

"A thousand instances could be given of the fatal tendency of this

passion, which first impoverishes the mind, and then perverts the understanding. Permit me to mention one, not caught from report, or dressed up by fancy, but such as has actually fallen under my own observation, and of the truth of which I beg your lordship may rest satisfied.

"At Tunbridge, in the year 1715, Mr. J. Hedges made a very brilliant appearance. He had been married about two years to a young lady of great beauty and large fortune; they had one child, a boy, on whom they bestowed all that affection which they could spare from each other. He knew nothing of gaming, nor seemed to have the least passion for play; but he was unacquainted with his own heart; he began by degrees to bet at the tables for trifling sums, and his soul took fire at the prospect of immediate gain; he was soon surrounded with sharpers, who with calmness lay in ambush for his fortune, and coolly took advantage of the precipitancy of his passions.

"His lady perceived the ruin of her family approaching, but at first without being able to form any scheme to prevent it. She advised with his brother, who at that time was possessed of a small fellowship in Cambridge. It was easily seen that whatever took the lead in her husband's mind seemed to be there fixed unalterably; it was determined, therefore, to let him pursue fortune, but previously take measures to prevent the pursuit being fatal.

"Accordingly, every night this gentleman was a constant attender at the hazard-tables; he understood neither the arts of sharpers nor even the allowed strokes of a connoisseur, yet still he played. The consequence is obvious: he lost his estate, his equipage, his wife's jewels, and every other movable that could be parted with, except a repeating-watch. His agony upon this occasion was inexpressible; he was even mean enough to ask a gentleman, who sat near, to lend him a few pieces, in order to turn his fortune; but this prudent gamester, who plainly saw there were no expectations of being repaid, refused to lend a farthing, alleging a former resolution against lending. Hedges was at last furious with the continuance of ill-success, and pulling out his watch, asked if any person in company would set him sixty guineas upon it: the company were silent; he then demanded fifty; still no answer; he sunk to forty, thirty, twenty; finding the company still without answering, he cried out, 'By G—d it shall never go for less!' and dashed it against the floor, at the same time attempting to dash out his brains against the marble chimney-piece.

"This last act of desperation immediately excited the attention of

the whole company; they instantly gathered round, and prevented the effects of his passion; and after he again became cool he was permitted to return home, with sullen discontent, to his wife. Upon his entering her apartment she received him with her usual tenderness and satisfaction, while he answered her caresses with contempt and severity, his disposition being quite altered with his misfortunes. 'But, my dear Jemmy,' says his wife, 'perhaps you don't know the news I have to tell; my mamma's old uncle is dead; the messenger is now in the house, and you know his estate is settled upon you.' This account seemed only to increase his agony, and, looking angrily at her, he cried, 'There you lie, my dear; his estate is not settled upon me.' 'I beg your pardon,' says she, 'I really thought it was, at least you have always told me so.' 'No,' returned he, 'as sure as you and I are to be miserable here, and our children beggars hereafter, I have sold the reversion of it this day, and have lost every farthing I got for it at the hazard-table.' 'What, all?' replied the lady. 'Yes, every farthing,' returned he; 'and I owe a thousand pounds more than I have to pay.' Thus speaking, he took a few frantic steps across the room. When the lady had a little enjoyed his perplexity, 'No, my dear,' cried she, 'you have lost but a trifle, and you owe nothing; our brother and I have taken care to prevent the effects of your rashness, and are actually the persons who have won your fortune: we employed proper persons for this purpose, who brought their winnings to me; your money, your equipage, are in my possession, and here I return them to you, from whom they were unjustly taken; I only ask permission to keep my jewels, and to keep you, my greatest jewel, from such dangers for the future.' Her prudence had the proper effect; he ever after retained a sense of his former follies, and never played for the smallest sums, even for amusement.

"Not less than three persons in one day fell a sacrifice at Bath to this destructive passion. Two gentlemen fought a duel, in which one was killed and the other desperately wounded; and a youth of great expectation and excellent disposition at the same time ended his own life by a pistol. If there be any state that deserves pity, it must be that of a gamester; but the state of a dying gamester is of all situations the most deplorable.

"There is another argument which your lordship, I fancy, will not entirely despise: beauty, my lord, I own is at best but a trifle, but such as it is, I fancy few would willingly part with what little they have. A man with a healthful complexion, how great a philosopher

soever he be, would not willingly exchange it for a sallow, hectic phiz, pale eyes, and a sharp, wrinkled visage. I entreat you only to examine the faces of all the noted gamblers round one of our public tables; have you ever seen anything more haggard, pinched, and miserable? And it is but natural that it should be so. The succession of passions flush the cheek with red, and all such flushings are ever succeeded by consequent paleness; so that a gamester contracts the sickly hue of a student, while he is only acquiring the stupidity of a fool.

"Your good-sense, my lord, I have often had an occasion of knowing, yet how miserable is it to be in a set of company where the most sensible is ever the least skilful; your footman, with a little instruction, would, I dare venture to affirm, make a better and more successful gamester than you; want of passions, and low cunning, are the two great arts; and it is peculiar to this science alone, that they who have the greatest passion for it are of all others the most unfit to practise it.

"Of all the men I ever knew, Spedding was the greatest blockhead, and yet the best gamester; he saw almost intuitively the advantage on either side, and ever took it; he could calculate the odds in a moment, and decide upon the merits of a cock or a horse better than any man in England; in short, he was such an adept in gaming that he brought it up to a pitch of sublimity it had never attained before; yet, with all this, Spedding could not write his own name. What he died worth I cannot tell, but of this I am certain, he might have possessed a ministerial estate, and that won from men famed for their sense, literature, and patriotism.

"If, after this description, your lordship is yet resolved to hazard your fortune at gaming, I beg you would advert to the situation of an old and luckless gamester. Perhaps there is not in nature a more deplorable being: his character is too well marked, he is too well known to be trusted. A man that has been often a bankrupt, and renewed trade upon low compositions, may as well expect extensive credit as such a man. His reputation is blasted: his constitution worn by the extravagance and ill hours of his profession; he is now incapable of alluring his dupes, and, like a superannuated savage of the forest, he is starved for want of vigor to hunt after prey.

"Thus gaming is the source of poverty, and, still worse, the parent of infamy and vice. It is an inlet to debauchery, for the money thus acquired is but little valued. Every gamester is a rake, and his

morals worse than his mystery. It is his interest to be exemplary in every scene of debauchery; his prey is to be courted with every guilty pleasure; but these are to be changed, repeated, and embellished, in order to employ his imagination, while his reason is kept asleep; a young mind is apt to shrink at the prospect of ruin; care must be taken to harden his courage, and make him keep his rank; he must be either found a libertine, or he must be made one. And when a man has parted with his money like a fool, he generally sends his conscience after it like a villain, and the nearer he is to the brink of destruction, the fonder does he grow of ruin.

"Your friend and mine, my lord, had been thus driven to the last reserve, for he found it impossible to disentangle his affairs and look the world in the face; impatience at length threw him into the abyss he feared, and life became a burden, because he feared to die. But I own that play is not always attended with such tragical circumstances: some have had courage to survive their losses, and go on content with beggary; and sure those misfortunes which are of our own production are of all others most pungent. To see such a poor, disbanded being an unwelcome guest at every table, and often flapped off like a fly, is affecting; in this case the closest alliance is forgotten, and contempt is too strong for the ties of blood to unbind.

"But, however fatal this passion may be in its consequence, none allures so much in the beginning; the person once listed as a gamester, if not soon reclaimed, pursues it through his whole life; no loss can retard, no danger awaken him to common-sense; nothing can terminate his career but want of money to play, or of honor to be trusted.

"Among the number of my acquaintance I knew but of two who succeeded by gaming; the one a phlegmatic, heavy man, who would have made a fortune in whatever way of life he happened to be placed; the other who had lost a fine estate in his youth by play, and retrieved a greater at the age of sixty-five, when he might be justly said to be past the power of enjoying it. One or two successful gamesters are thus set up in an age to allure the young beginner; we all regard such as the highest prize in a lottery, unmindful of the numerous losses that go to the accumulation of such infrequent success.

"Yet I would not be so morose as to refuse your youth all kinds of play; the innocent amusements of a family must often be indulged, and cards allowed to supply the intervals of more real pleasure; but the sum played for in such cases should always be a trifle; something to call up attention but not engage the passions. The usual excuse

for laying large sums is, to make the players attend to their game; but, in fact, he that plays only for shillings will mind his cards equally well with him that bets guineas; for the mind habituated to stake large sums will consider them as trifles at last; and if one shilling could not exclude indifference at first, neither will an hundred in the end.

"I have often asked myself, how it is possible that he who is possessed of competence can ever be induced to make it precarious by beginning play with the odds against him; for, wherever he goes to sport his money, he will find himself overmatched and cheated. Either at White's, Newmarket, the Tennis Court, the Cockpit, or the billiard-table, he will find numbers who have no other resource but their acquisitions there; and if such men live like gentlemen, he may readily conclude it must be on the spoils of his fortune, or the fortunes of ill-judging men like himself. Was he to attend but a moment to their manner of betting at those places, he would readily find the gamester seldom proposing bets but with the advantage in his own favor. A man of honor continues to lay on the side on which he first won; but gamesters shift, change, lie upon the lurch, and take every advantage, either of our ignorance or neglect.

"In short, my lord, if a man designs to lay out his fortune in quest of pleasure, the gaming-table is, of all other places, that where he can have least for his money. The company are superficial, extravagant, and unentertaining; the conversation flat, debauched, and absurd; the hours unnatural and fatiguing; the anxiety of losing is greater than the pleasure of winning; friendship must be banished from that society the members of which are intent only on ruining each other; every other improvement, either in knowledge or virtue, can scarce find room in that breast which is possessed by the spirit of play; the spirits become vapid, the constitution is enfeebled, the complexion grows pale, till, in the end, the mind, body, friends, fortune, and even the hopes of futurity, sink together! Happy, if Nature terminates the scene, and neither justice nor suicide are called in to accelerate her tardy approach.—I am, my lord," etc.

Among other papers in the custody of Mr. Nash, was the following angry letter, addressed to him in this manner:

"*To* RICHARD NASH, *Esq.*, *King of Bath.*

"SIRE,—I must desire your majesty to order the enclosed to be read to the great Mr. Hoyle, if he be found in any part of your

dominions. You will perceive that it is a panegyric on his manifold virtues, and that he is thanked more particularly for spending his time so much to the emolument of the public, and for obliging the world with a book more read than the Bible, and which so eminently tends to promote Christian knowledge, sound morality, and the happiness of mankind.

"(*The enclosed we have omitted, as it contains a satire on gaming, and may probably give offence to our betters.*)

"This author, however" (continues the letter-writer), "has not set forth half the merits of the piece under consideration, nor is the great care which he has taken to prevent our reading any other book, instead of this, been sufficiently taken notice of: beware of counterfeits; these books are not to be depended on unless signed by E. Hoyle, is a charitable admonition. As you have so much power at Bath, and are absolute, I think you should imitate other great monarchs, by rewarding those with honors who have been serviceable in your state; and I beg that a new order may be established for that purpose. Let him who has done nothing but game all his life, and has reduced the most families to ruin and beggary, be made a Marshal of the Black Ace; and those who are every day making proselytes to the tables have the honor of knighthood conferred on them, and be distinguished by the style and title of *Knights of the Four Knaves.*

"The moment I came into Bath my ears were saluted with the news of a gentleman's being plundered at the gaming-table, and having lost his senses on the occasion. The same day a duel was fought between two gentlemen gamesters on the Downs, and in the evening another hanged himself at the Bear, but first wrote a note which was found near him, importing that he had injured the best of friends. These are the achievements of your Knights of the Four Knaves. The Devil will pick the bones of all gamesters, that's certain. . . . Ay, and of duellers too; but in the mean time let none think that duelling is a mark of courage, for I know it is not. A person served under me in Flanders who had fought four duels, and depended so much on his skill, the strength of his arm, and the length of his sword, that he would take up a quarrel for anybody; yet in the field I never saw one behave so like a poltroon. If a few of these gamesters and duellers were gibbeted, it might perhaps help to amend the rest. I have often thought that the only way, or at least the most effectual way, to prevent duelling would be to hang both parties—the

living and the dead—on the same tree;[1] and if the winner and the loser were treated in the same manner, it would be better for the public, since the tucking up of a few R——ls might be a warning to others, and save many a worthy family from destruction.—I am yours," etc.

The author of this letter appears to have been very angry, and not without reason; for, if I am rightly informed, his only son was ruined at Bath, and by sharpers. But why is Mr. Nash to be blamed for this? It must be acknowledged that he always took pains to prevent the ruin of the youth of both sexes, and had so guarded against duelling that he would not permit a sword to be worn in Bath.

As the heart of a man is better known by his private than his public actions, let us take a view of Nash in domestic life, among his servants and dependents, where no gloss was required to color his sentiments and disposition, nor any mask necessary to conceal his foibles. Here we shall find him the same open-hearted, generous, good-natured man we have already described; one who was ever fond

[1] A scheme to prevent duelling similar to this was attempted by Gustavus Adolphus, and is thus recorded by the writer of his life:

"In one of the Prussian campaigns, when the irrational practice of duelling arose to a considerable height in the Swedish army, not only amongst persons of rank and fashion, but even amongst common soldiers, this prince published a severe edict, and denounced death against every delinquent. Soon after a quarrel arose between two officers of very high command, and as they knew the King's firmness in preserving his word inviolable, they agreed to request an audience, and besought his permission to decide the affair like men of honor. His Majesty took fire in a moment, but repressed his passion with such art that they easily mistook him; of course with some reluctance, but, under the appearance of pitying brave men who thought their reputation injured, he told them that he blamed them much for their mistaken notions concerning fame and glory, yet, as this unreasonable determination appeared to be the result of deliberate reflection, to the best of their deluded capacity, he would allow them to decide the affair at the time and place specified. 'And, gentlemen,' said he, 'I will be an eye-witness myself of your extraordinary valor and prowess.'

"At the hour appointed Gustavus arrived, accompanied by a small body of infantry, whom he formed into a circle round the combatants. 'Now,' said he, 'fight till one man dies;' and calling the executioner of the army to him (or the provost-marshal, as the language then ran), 'Friend,' added he, 'the instant one is killed, behead the other before my eyes.'

"Astonished with such inflexible firmness, the two generals, after pausing a moment, fell down on their knees and asked the King's forgiveness, who made them embrace each other, and give their promise to continue faithful friends to their last moments, as they did with sincerity and thankfulness."—GOLDSMITH.

of promoting the interests of his friends, his servants, and dependents, and making them happy. In his own house no man, perhaps, was more regular, cheerful, and beneficent than Nash. His table was always free to those who sought his friendship or wanted a dinner; and after grace was said he usually accosted the company in the following extraordinary manner, to take off all restraint and ceremony: "Come, gentlemen, eat and welcome; spare, and the devil choke you." I mention this circumstance for no other reason but because it is well known, and is consistent with the singularity of his character and behavior.

As Mr. Nash's thoughts were entirely employed in the affairs of his government, he was seldom at home but at the time of eating or of rest. His table was well served, but his entertainment consisted principally of plain dishes. Boiled chicken and roast mutton were his favorite meats, and he was so fond of the small sort of potatoes, that he called them English pineapples, and generally eat them as others do fruit, after dinner. In drinking he was altogether as regular and abstemious. Both in this and in eating he seemed to consult Nature and obey only her dictates. Good small-beer, with or without a glass of wine in it, and sometimes wine-and-water, was his drink at meals, and after dinner he generally drank one glass of wine. He seemed fond of hot suppers; usually supped about nine or ten o'clock upon roast breast of mutton and his potatoes, and soon after supper went to bed; which induced Dr. Cheyne to tell him jestingly that he behaved like other brutes, and lay down as soon as he had filled his belly. "Very true," replied Nash, "and this prescription I had from my neighbor's cow, who is a better physician than you, and a superior judge of plants, notwithstanding you have written so learnedly on the vegetable diet."

Nash generally arose early in the morning, being seldom in bed after five; and to avoid disturbing the family and depriving his servants of their rest, he had the fire laid after he was in bed, and in the morning lighted it himself, and sat down to read some of his few but well-chosen books. After reading some time, he usually went to the pump-room and drank the waters, then took a walk on the parade, and went to the coffee-house to breakfast; after which, till two o'clock (his usual time of dinner), his hours were spent in arbitrating differences amongst his neighbors, or the company resorting to the wells; in directing the diversions of the day, visiting the new-comers, or receiving friends at his own house, of which there was a great concourse till within six or eight years before his death.

His generosity and charity in private life, though not so conspicuous, was as great as that in public, and indeed far more considerable than his little income would admit of. He could not stifle the natural impulse which he had to do good, but frequently borrowed money to relieve the distressed; and when he knew not conveniently where to borrow, he has been often observed to shed tears, as he passed through the wretched supplicants who attended his gate.

This sensibility, this power of feeling the misfortunes of the miserable, and his address and earnestness in relieving their wants, exalts the character of Mr. Nash, and draws an impenetrable veil over his foibles. His singularities are forgotten when we behold his virtues, and he who laughed at the whimsical character and behavior of this Monarch of Bath now laments that he is no more.[1]

*** "I promised Nash, a few years before he died, that if I survived him I would write his epitaph. I performed my promise, and in my description of this extraordinary phenomenon I think I have written nothing but the truth; one thing I omitted, which I did not reflect on until after the epitaph was printed, that a statue had been erected to him whilst he was living; and this great honor had been conferred on him with more justice than to any other of his contemporaries or brother kings."—DR. KING, *Anecdotes*, p. 248.

[1] In 1790 a monument was erected to Nash in the Abbey Church, Bath, at the instigation, and chiefly at the expense, of Dr. Harrington, who supplied the epitaph:

"Adeste O Cives, adeste Lugentes!
Hic silent Leges
RICHARDI NASH, Armig.
Nihil amplius imperantis;
Qui diu et utilissimè
Assumptus Bathoniæ
Elegantiæ Arbiter,
Eheu!
Morti, (ultimo designatori)
Haud indecorè succubuit
Ann. Dom. MDCCLXI. Ætat suæ LXXXVII.
Beatus ille qui sibi imperiosus!

"If social virtues make remembrance dear,
Or manners pure on decent rule depend;
To *His* remains consign one grateful tear,
Of youth the Guardian, and of all the Friend.

"Now sleeps Dominion; here no Bounty flows,
Nor more avails the festive scene to grace,
Beneath that hand which no discernment shows,
Untaught to honor, or distinguish place."

THE LIFE

OF

THOMAS PARNELL, D.D.,

ARCHDEACON OF CLOGHER.

COMPILED FROM

ORIGINAL PAPERS AND MEMOIRS,

IN WHICH ARE INCLUDED SEVERAL LETTERS OF MR. POPE, MR. GAY, DR. ARBUTHNOT, ETC., ETC.

By DR. GOLDSMITH.

London:
Printed for T. Davies, in Russell-street, Covent Garden.
1770.
8vo.

This hurried composition, containing, however, something by Goldsmith in his happiest vein, was written for an edition of Parnell's "Poems," published by Davies in 1770. It was also published separately the same year. Price 1s.

"The Life of Dr. Parnell is a task which I should very willingly decline, since it has been lately written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion; whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness.

"What such an author has told, who would tell again? I have made an abstract from his larger narrative; and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith" Τὸ γαρ γέρας ἔστι θανοντων.—Dr. Johnson, *Life of Parnell.*

LIFE OF THOMAS PARNELL, D.D.

The life of a scholar seldom abounds with adventure. His fame is acquired in solitude; and the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions by which he is scarcely distinguished from the rest of mankind. But we are fond of talking of those who have given us pleasure; not that we have anything important to say, but because the subject is pleasing.

Thomas Parnell, D.D., was descended from an ancient family, that had for some centuries been settled at Congleton, in Cheshire. His father, Thomas Parnell, who had been attached to the Commonwealth party, upon the Restoration went over to Ireland; thither he carried a large personal fortune, which he laid out in lands in that kingdom. The estates he purchased there, as also that of which he was possessed in Cheshire, descended to our poet, who was his eldest son, and still remain in the family. Thus want, which has compelled many of our greatest men into the service of the Muses, had no influence upon Parnell; he was a poet by inclination.

He was born in Dublin, in the year 1679, and received the first rudiments of his education at the school of Dr. Jones, in that city. Surprising things are told us of the greatness of his memory at that early period; as of his being able to repeat by heart forty lines of any book at the first reading; of his getting the third book of the "Iliad" in one night's time, which was given in order to confine him for some days. These stories, which are told of almost every celebrated wit, may perhaps be true; but, for my own part, I never found any of those prodigies of parts, although I have known enough that was desirous, among the ignorant, of being thought so.

There is one presumption, however, of the early maturity of his understanding. He was admitted a member of the College of Dublin at the age of thirteen, which is much sooner than usual, as at that university they are a great deal stricter in their examination for en-

trance than either at Oxford or Cambridge. His progress through the college course of study was probably marked with but little splendor; his imagination might have been too warm to relish the cold logic of Burgersdicius or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius; but it is certain that, as a classical scholar, few could equal him. His own compositions show this; and the deference which the most eminent men of his time paid him upon that head put it beyond a doubt. He took the degree of master of arts the 9th of July, 1700; and in the same year he was ordained a deacon by William, Bishop of Derry, having a dispensation from the primate, as being under twenty-three years of age. He was admitted into priest's orders, about three years after, by William, Archbishop of Dublin; and on the 9th of February, 1705, he was collated by Sir George Ash, Bishop of Clogher, to the archdeaconry of Clogher.

About that time also he married Miss Anne Minchin, a young lady of great merit and beauty, by whom he had two sons, who died young, and one daughter, who is still [1770] living. His wife died some time before him; and her death is said to have made so great an impression on his spirits that it served to hasten his own.[1] On the 31st of May, 1716, he was presented by his friend and patron, Archbishop King, to the vicarage of Finglas, a benefice worth about four hundred pounds a year,[2] in the diocese of Dublin; but he lived to enjoy his preferment a very short time. He died at Chester, in July, 1717,[3] on his way to Ireland, and was buried in Trinity Church, in that town, without any monument to mark the place of his interment. As he died without male issue, his estate devolved to his only nephew, Sir John Parnell, Baronet, whose father was younger brother to the Archdeacon, and one of the Justices of the King's Bench in Ireland.

Such is the very unpoetical detail of the life of a poet. Some dates, and some few facts scarcely more interesting than those that make the ornaments of a country tombstone, are all that remain of one whose labors now begin to excite universal curiosity. A poet, while

[1] "I am heartily sorry for poor Mrs. Parnell's death: she seemed to be an excellent, good-natured young woman, and I believe the poor lad is much afflicted; they appeared to live perfectly well together."—SWIFT, *Journal to Stella*, 24th of August, 1711.

[2] Johnson follows Goldsmith, but the value of the living is much over-rated.

[3] The register of Trinity Church, Chester, records the burial of Thomas Parnell, D.D., under the 18th of October, 1718. See JOHNSON'S *Lives of the Poets*. (Ed. Cunningham, ii. 91.)

living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendor.

There is scarcely any man but might be made the subject of a very interesting and amusing history, if the writer, besides a thorough acquaintance with the character he draws, were able to make those nice distinctions which separate it from all others. The strongest minds have usually the most striking peculiarities, and would consequently afford the richest materials; but in the present instance, from not knowing Dr. Parnell, his peculiarities are gone to the grave with him; and we are obliged to take his character from such as knew but little of him, or who, perhaps, could have given very little information if they had known more.

Parnell, by what I have been able to collect from my father and uncle, who knew him, was the most capable man in the world to make the happiness of those he conversed with, and the least able to secure his own. He wanted that evenness of disposition which bears disappointment with phlegm, and joy with indifference. He was ever very much elated or depressed, and his whole life was spent in agony or rapture. But the turbulence of these passions only affected himself, and never those about him: he knew the ridicule of his own character, and very effectually raised the mirth of his companions, as well at his vexations as at his triumphs.

How much his company was desired appears from the extensiveness of his connections and the number of his friends. Even before he made any figure in the literary world, his friendship was sought by persons of every rank and party. The wits at that time differed a good deal from those who are most eminent for their understanding at present. It would now be thought a very indifferent sign of a writer's good-sense to disclaim his private friends for happening to be of a different party in politics; but it was then otherwise; the Whig wits held the Tory wits in great contempt, and these retaliated in their turn. At the head of one party were Addison, Steele, and Congreve; at that of the other, Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot. Parnell was a friend to both sides, and, with a liberality becoming a scholar, scorned all those trifling distinctions that are noisy for the time, and ridiculous to posterity. Nor did he emancipate himself from these

without some opposition from home. Having been the son of a Commonwealth's man, his Tory connections on this side of the water gave his friends in Ireland great offence. They were much enraged to see him keep company with Pope, and Swift, and Gay; they blamed his undistinguishing taste, and wondered what pleasure he could find in the conversation of men who approved the treaty of Utrecht and disliked the Duke of Marlborough. His conversation is said to have been extremely pleasing; but in what its peculiar excellence consisted is now unknown. The letters which were written to him by his friends are full of compliments upon his talents as a companion and his good-nature as a man. I have several of them now before me. Pope was particularly fond of his company, and seems to regret his absence more than any of the rest. A letter from him follows thus:

"London, July 29 [1716].

"DEAR SIR,—I wish it were not as ungenerous as vain to complain too much of a man that forgets me, but I could expostulate with you a whole day upon your inhuman silence: I call it inhuman; nor would you think it less, if you were truly sensible of the uneasiness it gives me. Did I know you so ill as to think you proud, I would be much less concerned than I am able to be, when I know one of the best-natured men alive neglects me; and if you know me so ill as to think amiss of me, with regard to my friendship for you, you really do not deserve half the trouble you occasion me.

"I need not tell you, that both Mr. Gay and myself have written several letters in vain; and that we were constantly inquiring, of all who have seen Ireland, if they saw you, and that (forgotten as we are) we are every day remembering you in our most agreeable hours. All this is true; as that we are sincerely lovers of you, and deplorers of your absence, and that we form no wish more ardently than that which brings you over to us, and places you in your old seat between us. We have lately had some distant hopes of the Dean's design to revisit England; will not you accompany him? or is England to lose everything that has any charms for us, and must we pray for banishment as a benediction? I have once been witness of some, I hope all, of your splenetic hours: come and be a comforter in your turn to me, in mine.

"I am in such an unsettled state, that I can't tell if I shall ever see you, unless it be this year: whether I do or not, be ever assured you have as large a share of my thoughts and good wishes as any man,

and as great a portion of gratitude in my heart as would enrich a monarch, could he know where to find it. I shall not die without testifying something of this nature, and leaving to the world a memorial of the friendship that has been so great a pleasure and pride to me. It would be like writing my own epitaph, to acquaint you what I have lost since I saw you, what I have done, what I have thought, where I have lived, and where I now repose in obscurity. My friend Jervas, the bearer of this, will inform you of all particulars concerning me; and Mr. Ford is charged with a thousand loves and a thousand commissions to you on my part. They will both tax you with the neglect of some promises which were too agreeable to us all to be forgot: if you care for any of us, tell them so, and write so to me. I can say no more, but that I love you, and am, in spite of the longest neglect or absence, dear sir, your most faithful, affectionate friend and servant, A. POPE.

"Gay is in Devonshire, and from thence he goes to Bath. My father and mother never fail to commemorate you."[1]

Among the number of his most intimate friends was Lord Oxford, whom Pope has so finely complimented upon the delicacy of his choice:

> "For him thou oft hast bid the world attend,
> Fond to forget the statesman in the friend;
> For Swift and him despis'd the farce of state,
> The sober follies of the wise and great;
> Dext'rous the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
> And pleas'd to 'scape from flattery to wit."

Pope himself was not only excessively fond of his company, but under several literary obligations to him for his assistance in the translation of Homer. Gay was obliged to him upon another account; for, being always poor, he was not above receiving from Parnell the copy-money which the latter got for his writings.[2] Several of their letters, now before me, are proofs of this; and as they have never appeared before,[3] it is probable the reader will be much better pleased with their idle effusions, than with anything I can hammer out for his amusement.

[1] Roscoe's "Pope," vol. viii. p. 44, ed. 1847.

[2] Lintot's account-book, under the 4th of May, 1717, contains a payment to Gay of £16 2*s.* 6*d.* (fifteen guineas) for the "Battle of the Frogs."

[3] They have since been included in Pope's works.

"Binfield, near Oakingham, Tuesday [October, 1714?].

"DEAR SIR,—I believe the hurry you were in hindered your giving me a word by the last post, so that I am yet to learn whether you got well to town, or continue so there? I very much fear both for your health and your quiet; and no man living can be more truly concerned in anything that touches either than myself. I would comfort myself, however, with hoping that your business may not be unsuccessful, for your sake; and that at least it may soon be put into other proper hands. For my own, I beg earnestly of you to return to us as soon as possible. You know how very much I want you; and that, however your business may depend on any other, my business depends entirely upon you; and yet still I hope you will find your man, even though I lose you the meanwhile. At this time, the more I love you, the more I can spare you; which alone will, I dare say, be a reason to you to let me have you back the sooner.

"The minute I lost you, Eustathius, with nine hundred pages and nine thousand contradictions of the Greek characters, arose to view! Spondanus, with all his auxiliaries, in number a thousand pages (value three shillings), and Dacier's three volumes, Barnes's two, Valterie's three, Cuperus, half in Greek, Leo Allatus, three parts in Greek, Scaliger, Macrobius, and (worse than all) Aulus Gellius! All these rushed upon my soul at once, and whelmed me under a fit of the headache. I cursed them all religiously, damned my best friends among the rest, and even blasphemed Homer himself.

"Dear sir, not only as you are a friend and a good-natured man, but as you are a Christian and a divine, come back speedily, and prevent the increase of my sins; for, at the rate I have begun to rave, I shall not only damn all the poets and commentators who have gone before me, but be damned myself by all who come after me. To be serious; you have not only left me to the last degree impatient for your return, who at all times should have been so (though never so much as since I knew you in the best health here), but you have wrought several miracles upon our family; you have made old people fond of a young and gay person, and inveterate papists, of a clergyman of the Church of England; even nurse herself is in danger of being in love in her old age, and (for all I know) would even marry Dennis for your sake, because he is your man, and loves his master. In short, come down forthwith, or give me good reasons for delaying, though but for a day or two, by the next post. If I find them just, I will come up to you, though you know how precious my time is at

present: my hours were never worth so much money before; but perhaps you are not sensible of this, who give away your own works. You are a generous author; I a hackney scribbler: you a Grecian, and bred at an university; I a poor Englishman, of my own educating; you a reverend parson, I a wag: in short, you are Dr. Parnelle (with an *e* at the end of your name), and I, your most obliged and affectionate friend and faithful servant, A. Pope.

"My hearty service to the Dean, Dr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Ford, and the true genuine shepherd, J. Gay, of Devon. I expect him down with you."[1]

We may easily perceive by this that Parnell was not a little necessary to Pope in conducting his translation; however, he has worded it so ambiguously that it is impossible to bring the charge directly against him. But he is much more explicit when he mentions his friend Gay's obligations in another letter, which he takes no pains to conceal:

"Dear Sir,—I write to you with the same warmth, the same zeal of good-will and friendship, with which I used to converse with you two years ago, and can't think myself absent when I feel you so much at my heart. The picture of you, which Jervas brought me over, is infinitely less lively a representation than that I carry about with me, and which rises to my mind whenever I think of you. I have many an agreeable reverie through those woods and downs where we once rambled together; my head is sometimes at the Bath, and sometimes at Letcombe,[2] where the Dean makes a great part of my imaginary entertainment, this being the cheapest way of treating me; I hope he will not be displeased at this manner of paying my respects to him, instead of following my friend Jervas's example, which, to say the truth, I have as much inclination to do as I want ability.

"I have been ever since December last in greater variety of business than any such men as you (that is, divines and philosophers) can possibly imagine a reasonable creature capable of. Gay's play,[3] among

[1] Roscoe's "Pope," vol. viii. p. 21, ed. 1847.

[2] In Berkshire, whither Swift retreated, when (1714) the last ministry of Queen Anne was broken up. Mr. Croker's edition of "Pope" will contain a very curious and hitherto unpublished letter from Pope to Arbuthnot, describing a visit, made by Parnell and himself, to Swift at Letcombe.

[3] "Three Hours after Marriage."

the rest, has cost much time and long-suffering, to stem a tide of malice and party that certain authors have raised against it; the best revenge on such fellows is now in my hands, I mean your 'Zoilus,' which really transcends the expectation I had conceived of it. I have put it into the press, beginning with the poem 'Batrachom;' for you seem, by the first paragraph of the dedication of it, to design to prefix the name of some particular person. I beg therefore to know for whom you intend it, that the publication may not be delayed on this account, and this as soon as is possible. Inform me also upon what terms I am to deal with the bookseller, and whether you design the copy-money for Gay, as you formerly talked; what number of books you would have yourself, etc. I scarce see anything to be altered in this whole piece; in the poems you sent I will take the liberty you allow me: the story of 'Pandora,' and the 'Eclogue upon Health,' are two of the most beautiful things I ever read. I do not say this to the prejudice of the rest, but as I have read these oftener. Let me know how far my commission is to extend, and be confident of my punctual performance of whatever you enjoin. I must add a paragraph on this occasion in regard to Mr. Ward, whose verses have been a great pleasure to me; I will contrive they shall be so to the world, whenever I can find a proper opportunity of publishing them.

"I shall very soon print an entire collection of my own madrigals, which I look upon as making my last will and testament, since in it I shall give all I ever intend to give (which I'll beg yours and the Dean's acceptance of). You must look on me no more a poet, but a plain commoner, who lives upon his own, and fears and flatters no man. I hope before I die to discharge the debt I owe to Homer, and get, upon the whole, just fame enough to serve for an annuity for my own time, though I leave nothing to posterity.

"I beg our correspondence may be more frequent than it has been of late. I am sure my esteem and love for you never more deserved it from you, or more prompted it from you. I desired our friend Jervas (in the greatest hurry of my business) to say a great deal in my name, both to yourself and the Dean, and must once more repeat the assurances to you both of an unchanging friendship and unalterable esteem.—I am, dear sir, most entirely, your affectionate, faithful, obliged friend and servant, A. Pope."[1]

[1] Roscoe's "Pope," vol. viii. p. 48, ed. 1847.

From these letters to Parnell we may conclude, as far as their testimony can go, that he was an agreeable, a generous, and a sincere man. Indeed, he took care that his friends should always see him to the best advantage; for, when he found his fits of spleen and uneasiness, which sometimes lasted for weeks together, returning, he returned with all expedition to the remote parts of Ireland, and there made out a gloomy kind of satisfaction in giving hideous descriptions of the solitude to which he retired. It is said of a famous painter that, being confined in prison for debt, his whole delight consisted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricature. It was just so with Parnell. From many of his unpublished pieces which I have seen, and from others that have appeared, it would seem that scarcely a bog in his neighborhood was left without reproach, *and scarce a mountain rear'd its head unsung.*[1] "I can easily," says Pope, in one of his letters, in answer to a dreary description of Parnell's—"I can easily imagine to my thoughts the solitary hours of your eremitical life in the mountains, from some parallel to it in my own retirement at Binfield;" and in another place, "We are both miserably enough situated, God knows; but of the two evils, I think the solitudes of the South are to be preferred to the deserts of the West." In this manner Pope answered him in the tone of his own complaints; and these descriptions of the imagined distress of his situation served to give him a temporary relief: they threw off the blame from himself, and laid upon fortune and accident a wretchedness of his own creating.

But though this method of quarrelling in his poems with his situation served to relieve himself, yet it was not easily endured by the gentlemen of the neighborhood, who did not care to confess themselves his fellow-sufferers. He received many mortifications upon that account among them; for, being naturally fond of company, he could not endure to be without even theirs, which, however, among his English friends he pretended to despise. In fact, his conduct, in this particular, was rather splenetic than wise; he had either lost the art to engage, or did not employ his skill in securing, those more permanent though more humble connections, and sacrificed for a month or two in England a whole year's happiness by his country fireside at home.

[1] "For here the Muse so oft her harp has strung,
That not a mountain rears its head unsung."
ADDISON, *A Letter from Italy.*

However, what he permitted the world to see of his life was elegant and splendid; his fortune (for a poet) was very considerable, and it may easily be supposed he lived to the very extent of it. The fact is, his expenses were greater than his income, and his successor found the estate somewhat impaired at his decease. As soon as ever he had collected in his annual revenues, he immediately set out for England, to enjoy the company of his dearest friends, and laugh at the more prudent world that were minding business and gaining money. The friends to whom, during the latter part of his life, he was chiefly attached were Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Jervas, and Gay. Among these he was particularly happy; his mind was entirely at ease, and gave a loose to every harmless folly that came uppermost. Indeed, it was a society in which, of all others, a wise man might be most foolish, without incurring any danger or contempt. Perhaps the reader will be pleased to see a letter to him from a part of this junto, as there is something striking even in the levities of genius. It comes from Gay, Jervas, Arbuthnot, and Pope, assembled at a chop-house near the Exchange, and is as follows:

[1715–16.]

"My Dear Sir,—I was last summer in Devonshire, and am this winter at Mrs. Bonyer's. In the summer I wrote a poem,[1] and in the winter I have published it, which I have sent to you by Mr. Ellwood. In the summer I ate two dishes of toad-stools, of my own gathering, instead of mushrooms; and in the winter I have been sick with wine, as I am at this time, blessed be God for it! as I must bless God for all things. In the summer I spoke truth to damsels; in the winter I told lies to ladies. Now you know where I have been, and what I have done, I shall tell you what I intend to do the ensuing summer. I propose to do the same thing I did last, which was to meet you in any part of England you would appoint; don't let me have two disappointments. I have longed to hear from you, and to that intent I teased you with three or four letters; but, having no answer, I feared both yours and my letters might have miscarried. I hope my performance will please the Dean, whom I often wish for, and to whom I would have often wrote, but for the same reasons I neglected writing to you. I hope I need not tell you how I love you, and how glad I shall be to hear from you; which, next to seeing you, would

[1] His "Trivia; or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London," published in 1715–16.

be the greatest satisfaction to your most affectionate friend and humble servant, J. G."[1]

"DEAR MR. ARCHDEACON,—Though my proportion of this epistle should be but a sketch in miniature, yet I take up this half page, having paid my club with the good company both for our dinner of chops and for this paper. The poets will give you lively descriptions in their way; I shall only acquaint you with that which is directly my province. I have just set the last hand to a couplet; for so I may call two nymphs in one piece. They are Pope's favorites, and though few, you will guess must have cost me more pains than any nymphs can be worth. He has been so unreasonable as to expect that I should have made them as beautiful upon canvas as he has done upon paper. If this same Mr. P. should omit to write for the dear Frogs, and the Pervigilium, I must entreat you not to let me languish for them, as I have done ever since they crossed the seas: remember by what neglects, etc., we missed them when we lost you, and therefore I have not yet forgiven any of those triflers that let them escape and run those hazards. I am going on at the old rate, and want you and the Dean prodigiously, and am in hopes of making you a visit this summer, and of hearing from you both, now you are together. Fortescue, I am sure, will be concerned that he is not in Cornhill, to set his hand to these presents, not only as a witness, but as a *serviteur très-humble.* C. JERVAS."

"It is so great an honor to a poor Scotchman to be remembered at this time of day, especially by an inhabitant of the Glacialis Ierne, that I take it very thankfully, and have, with my good friends, remembered you at our table in the chop-house in Exchange Alley. There wanted nothing to complete our happiness but your company, and our dear friend the Dean's. I am sure the whole entertainment would have been to his relish. Gay has got so much money by his 'Art of Walking the Streets,' that he is ready to set up his equipage: he is just going to the Bank to negociate some exchange-bills. Mr. Pope delays his second volume of his Homer till the martial spirit of the rebels is quite quelled; it being judged that the first part did some harm that way. Our love again and again to the dear Dean. *Fuimus Tories,* I can say no more. ARBUTHNOT."

[1] This letter of Gay's is not included in the copy printed in Pope's works. See Roscoe's "Pope," vol. viii. p. 32, ed. 1847.

"When a man is conscious that he does no good himself, the next thing is to cause others to do some. I may claim some merit this way, in hastening this testimonial from your friends above-writing: their love to you, indeed, wants no spur, their ink wants no pen, their pen wants no hand, their hand wants no heart, and so forth (after the manner of Rabelais: which is betwixt some meaning and no meaning); and yet it may be said, when present thought and opportunity is wanting, their pens want ink, their hands want pens, their hearts want hands, etc., till time, place, and conveniency concur to set them writing, as at present, a sociable meeting, a good dinner, warm fire, and an easy situation do, to the joint labor and pleasure of this epistle.

"Wherein if I should say nothing I should say much (much being included in my love), though my love be such, that, if I should say much, I should yet say nothing, it being (as Cowley says) equally impossible either to conceal or to express it.

"If I were to tell you the thing I wish above all things, it is to see you again; the next is to see here your treatise of Zoilus, with the 'Batrachomuomachia,' and the 'Pervigilium Veneris,' both which poems are masterpieces in several kinds; and I question not the prose is as excellent in its sort as the Essay on Homer. Nothing can be more glorious to that great author, than that the same hand that raised his best statue, and decked it with its old laurels, should also hang up the scarecrow of his miserable critic, and gibbet up the carcass of Zoilus to the terror of the witlings of posterity. More, and much more, upon this and a thousand other subjects, will be the matter of my next letter, wherein I must open all the friend to you. At this time I must be content with telling you, I am faithfully your most affectionate and humble servant, A. Pope."

If we regard this letter with a critical eye, we shall find it indifferent enough; if we consider it as a mere effusion of friendship, in which every writer contended in affection, it will appear much to the honor of those who wrote it. To be mindful of an absent friend in the hours of mirth and feasting, when his company is least wanted, shows no slight degree of sincerity. Yet probably there was still another motive for writing thus to him in conjunction. The above-named, together with Swift and Parnell, had some time before formed themselves into a society, called the Scriblerus Club, and I should suppose they commemorated him thus, as being an absent member.

It is past a doubt that they wrote many things in conjunction, and Gay usually held the pen; and yet I do not remember any productions which were the joint effort of this society, as doing it honor. There is something feeble and quaint in all their attempts, as if company repressed thought, and genius wanted solitude for its boldest and happiest exertions. Of those productions in which Parnell had a principal share, that of the "Origin of the Sciences from the Monkeys in Ethiopia" is particularly mentioned by Pope himself, in some manuscript anecdotes which he left behind him.[1] The Life of Homer, also, prefixed to the translation of the "Iliad," is written by Parnell and corrected by Pope; and, as that great poet assures us in the same place, this correction was not effected without great labor. "It is still stiff," says he, "and was written still stiffer; as it is, I verily think it cost me more pains in the correcting than the writing it would have done."[2] All this may be easily credited; for everything of Parnell's that has appeared in prose is written in a very awkward, inelegant manner. It is true his productions teem with imagination, and show great learning; but they want that ease and sweetness for which his poetry is so much admired, and the language is also most shamefully incorrect. Yet, though all this must be allowed, Pope should have taken care not to leave his errors upon record against him, or put it in the power of envy to tax his friend with faults that do not appear in what he has left to the world. A poet has a right to expect the same secrecy in his friend as in his confessor; the sins he discovers are not divulged for punishment but pardon. Indeed, Pope is almost inexcusable in this instance, as what he seems to condemn in one place he very much applauds in another. In one of the letters from him to Parnell, above-mentioned, he treats the Life of Homer with much greater respect, and seems to say that the prose is excellent in its kind. It must be confessed, however, that he is by no means inconsistent: what he says in both places may very easily be reconciled to truth; but who can defend his candor and his sincerity?

It would be hard, however, to suppose that there was no real friendship between these great men. The benevolence of Parnell's disposition remains unimpeached; and Pope, though subject to starts of passion and envy, yet never missed an opportunity of being truly service-

[1] Pope told Spence that "'The Origin of the Sciences from the Monkeys in Ethiopia' was written by himself, Dean Parnell, and Dr. Arbuthnot."—POPE, in *Spence*, by Singer, p. 201.

[2] Spence, by Singer, p. 138.

able to him. The commerce between them was carried on to the common interest of both. When Pope had a Miscellany to publish, he applied to Parnell for poetical assistance, and the latter as implicitly submitted to him for correction. Thus they mutually advanced each other's interest or fame, and grew stronger by conjunction. Nor was Pope the only person to whom Parnell had recourse for assistance. We learn from Swift's letters to Stella that he submitted his pieces to all his friends, and readily adopted their alterations. Swift, among the number, was very useful to him in that particular; and care has been taken that the world should not remain ignorant of the obligation.

But, in the connection of wits, interest has generally very little share; they have only pleasure in view, and can seldom find it but among each other. The Scriblerus Club, when the members were in town, were seldom asunder; and they often made excursions together into the country, and generally on foot. Swift was usually the butt of the company; and if a trick was played he was always the sufferer. The whole party once agreed to walk down to the house of Lord B——,[1] who is still living, and whose seat is about twelve miles from town.[2] As every one agreed to make the best of his way, Swift, who was remarkable for walking, soon left the rest behind him, fully resolved, upon his arrival, to choose the very best bed for himself; for that was his custom. In the mean time, Parnell was determined to prevent his intentions, and, taking horse, arrived at Lord B——'s by another way long before him. Having apprised his lordship of Swift's design, it was resolved, at any rate, to keep him out of the house; but how to effect this was the question. Swift never had the small-pox, and was very much afraid of catching it; as soon, therefore, as he appeared, striding along at a distance from the house, one of his lordship's servants was despatched to inform him that the small-pox was then making great ravages in the family, but that there was a summer-house with a field-bed at his service at the end of the garden. There the disappointed Dean was obliged to retire, and take a cold supper that was sent out to him, while the rest were feasting within. However, at last they took compassion on him; and upon his promising never to choose the best bed again, they permitted him to make one of the company.

[1] Earl Bathurst died 1775.

[2] Riskings, near Colnbrook, in Buckinghamshire. Goldsmith has understated its distance from London.

There is something satisfactory in these accounts of the follies of the wise; they give a natural air to the picture, and reconcile us to our own. There have been few poetical societies more talked of, or productive of a greater variety of whimsical conceits, than this of the Scriblerus Club; but how long it lasted I cannot exactly determine. The whole of Parnell's poetical existence was not of more than eight or ten years' continuance. His first excursions to England began about the year 1706, and he died in the year 1717;[1] so that it is probable the club began with him, and his death ended the connection. Indeed, the festivity of his conversation, the benevolence of his heart, and the generosity of his temper, were qualities that might serve to cement any society, and that could hardly be replaced when he was taken away. During the two or three last years of his life he was more fond of company than ever, and could scarce bear to be alone. The death of his wife, it is said, was a loss to him that he was unable to support or recover. From that time he could never venture to court the muse in solitude, where he was sure to find the image of her who first inspired his attempts. He began, therefore, to throw himself into every company, and to seek from wine if not relief, at least insensibility. Those helps that sorrow first called for assistance habit soon rendered necessary, and he died before his fortieth year, in some measure a martyr to conjugal fidelity.[2]

Thus, in the space of a very few years, Parnell attained a share of fame equal to what most of his contemporaries were a long life in acquiring. He is only to be considered as a poet; and the universal esteem in which his poems are held, and the reiterated pleasure they give in the perusal, are a sufficient test of their merit. He appears to me to be the last of that great school that had modelled itself upon the ancients, and taught English poetry to resemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A studious and correct observer of antiquity, he set himself to consider nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he resembled the other. To copy nature is a task the most bungling workman is able to execute; to select such parts as contribute to delight is reserved only for those whom accident has blest with uncommon talents, or such as have read the

[1] See note at p. 158.

[2] Compare Ruffhead's "Pope," p. 492; Spence, by Singer, p. 139; Johnson, in his "Life of Parnell," and Boswell, by Croker, ed. 1847, p. 546.

ancients with indefatigable industry. Parnell is ever happy in the selection of his images, and scrupulously careful in the choice of his subjects. His productions bear no resemblance to those tawdry things which it has for some time been the fashion to admire; in writing which the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images without any selection; where the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary, he can scarcely tell why. Our poet, on the contrary, gives out his beauties with a more sparing hand; he is still carrying his reader forward, and just gives him refreshment sufficient to support him to his journey's end. At the end of his course the reader regrets that his way has been so short; he wonders that it gave him so little trouble, and so resolves to go the journey over again.

His poetical language is not less correct than his subjects are pleasing. He found it at that period in which it was brought to its highest pitch of refinement; and ever since his time it has been gradually debasing. It is indeed amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addison, and Pope to improve and harmonize our native tongue, that their successors should have taken so much pains to involve it in pristine barbarity. These misguided innovators have not been content with restoring antiquated words and phrases, but have indulged themselves in the most licentious transpositions and the harshest constructions, vainly imagining that the more their writings are unlike prose the more they resemble poetry; they have adopted a language of their own, and call upon mankind for admiration. All those who do not understand them are silent, and those who make out their meaning are willing to praise, to show they understand. From these follies and affectations the poems of Parnell are entirely free; he has considered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expression.

Parnell has written several poems besides those published by Pope; and some of them have been made public with but very little credit to his reputation. There are still many more that have not yet seen the light, in possession of Sir John Parnell, his nephew; who, from that laudable zeal which he has for his uncle's reputation, will probably be slow in publishing what he may even suspect will do it injury. Of those which are usually inserted in his works, some are indifferent and some moderately good; but the greater part are excellent. A slight stricture on the most striking shall conclude this account, which I have already drawn out to a disproportioned length.

"Hesiod, or the Rise of Woman," is a very fine illustration of a hint from Hesiod. It was one of his earliest productions, and first appeared in a miscellany published by Tonson. Of the three songs that follow, two of them were written upon the lady he afterwards married; they were the genuine dictates of his passion, but are not excellent in their kind.

The Anacreontic, beginning with, "When spring came on with fresh delight," is taken from a French poet whose name I forget, and, as far as I am able to judge of the French language, is better than the original. The Anacreontic that follows, "Gay Bacchus," etc., is also a translation of a Latin poem, by Aurelius Augurellus, an Italian poet,[1] beginning with,

"Invitat olim Bacchus ad cænam suos
Comum, Jocum, Cupidinem."

Parnell, when he translated it, applied the characters to some of his friends; and as it was written for their entertainment, it probably gave them more pleasure than it has given the public in the perusal. It seems to have more spirit than the original; but it is extraordinary that it was published as an original and not as a translation. Pope should have acknowledged it, as he knew. The "Fairy Tale" is incontestably one of the finest pieces in any language. The old dialect is not perfectly well preserved; but this is a very slight defect, where all the rest is so excellent.

The "Pervigilium Veneris" (which, by-the-bye, does not belong to Catullus) is very well versified; and in general all Parnell's translations are excellent. The "Battle of the Frogs and Mice," which follows, is done as well as the subject would admit; but there is a defect in the translation which sinks it below the original, and which it was impossible to remedy—I mean the names of the combatants, which in the Greek bear a ridiculous allusion to their natures, have no force to the English reader.[2] A bacon-eater was a good name for a mouse, and Pternotractas in Greek was a very good sounding word, that conveyed that meaning. Puff-cheek would sound odiously as a name for a frog, and yet Physignathos does admirably well in the original.

The "Letter to Mr. Pope" is one of the finest compliments that

[1] "He [Goldsmith] ought to have remarked that the latter part is purely Parnell's."—JOHNSON, *Life of Parnell.*

[2] "Goldsmith has very properly remarked, that in the 'Battle of the Frogs and Mice' the Greek names have not in English their original effect."—JOHNSON, *Life of Parnell.*

ever was paid to any poet; the description of his situation at the end of it is very fine, but far from being true. That part of it where he deplores his being far from wit and learning, as being far from Pope, gave particular offence to his friends at home. Mr. Coote, a gentleman in his neighborhood, who thought that he himself had wit, was very much displeased with Parnell for casting his eyes so far off for a learned friend, when he could so conveniently be supplied at home.

The translation of a part of "The Rape of the Lock" into monkish verse, serves to show what a master Parnell was of the Latin: a copy of verses made in this manner is one of the most difficult trifles that can possibly be imagined. I am assured that it was written upon the following occasion. Before "The Rape of the Lock" was yet completed, Pope was reading it to his friend Swift, who sat very attentively, while Parnell, who happened to be in the house, went in and out, without seeming to take any notice. However, he was very diligently employed in listening, and was able, from the strength of his memory, to bring away the whole description of the toilet pretty exactly. This he versified in the manner now published in his works; and the next day, when Pope was reading the poem to some friends, Parnell insisted that he had stolen that part of the description from an old monkish manuscript. An old paper with the Latin verses was soon brought forth, and it was not till after some time that Pope was delivered from the confusion which it at first produced.[1]

The "Book-worm" is another unacknowledged translation, from a Latin poem by Beza. It was the fashion with the wits of the last age to conceal the places whence they took their hints or their subjects. A trifling acknowledgment would have made that lawful prize which may now be considered as plunder.

The "Night Piece on Death" deserves every praise, and I should suppose, with very little amendment, might be made to surpass all those night pieces and church-yard scenes[2] that have since appeared. But the poem of Parnell's best known, and on which his best reputa-

[1] "Mr. Harte told me that Dryden had been imposed on by a similar little stratagem. One of his friends translated into Latin verse, printed, and pasted on the bottom of an old hat-box, that celebrated passage, 'To die is landing on some silent shore,' etc., and that Dryden, on opening the box, was alarmed and amazed." —JOSEPH WARTON.

[2] "The 'Night Piece on Death' is indirectly preferred by Goldsmith to Gray's 'Church-yard;' but, in my opinion, Gray has the advantage in dignity, variety, and originality of sentiment."—JOHNSON, *Life of Parnell.*

tion is grounded, is "The Hermit." Pope, speaking of this in those manuscript anecdotes already quoted,[1] says that "the poem is very good. The story," continues he, "was written originally in Spanish, whence probably Howel had translated it into prose, and inserted it in one of his letters."[2] However this may be, Dr. Henry More, in his dialogues, has the very same story; and I have been informed by some that it is originally of Arabian invention.

With respect to the prose works of Parnell, I have mentioned them already; his fame is too well grounded for any defects in them to shake it. I will only add that the "Life of Zoilus" was written at the request of his friends, and designed as a satire upon Dennis and Theobald, with whom his Club had long been at variance. I shall end this account with a letter to him from Pope and Gay, in which they endeavored to hasten him to finish that production:

"London, March 18, 1715.[3]

"DEAR SIR,—I must own I have long owed you a letter, but you must own you have owed me one a good deal longer. Besides, I have but two people in the whole kingdom of Ireland to take care of: the Dean and you; but you have several, who complain of your neglect in England. Mr. Gay complains, Mr. Harcourt complains, Mr. Jervas complains, Dr. Arbuthnot complains, my Lord complains, I complain. (Take notice of this figure of iteration when you make your next sermon.) Some say you are in deep discontent at the new turn of affairs; others, that you are so much in the Archbishop's good graces, that you will not correspond with any that have seen the last ministry. Some affirm you have quarrelled with Pope (whose friends they observe daily fall from him, on account of his satirical and comical disposition); others, that you are insinuating yourself into the opinion of the ingenious 'Mr. What-do-ye-call-him.' Some think you are preparing your Sermons for the press, and others that you will transform them into essays and moral discourses. But the only excuse that I will allow is your attention to the 'Life of Zoilus.' The Frogs already seem to croak for their transportation to England, and are

[1] Goldsmith alludes to Spence's "Collection," then (1770) unpublished, though seen and used in part by Joseph Warton. See Spence, by Singer, p. 139.

[2] Here the texts adds: "Addison liked the scheme, and was not disinclined to come into it." But the passage (it is said by Pope) has no meaning here.

[3] The editors of Pope affix the date "May, 1715," to this letter. Goldsmith, it is evident, copies the original letter.

sensible how much that doctor is cursed and hated, who introduced their species into your nation; therefore, as you dread the wrath of St. Patrick, send them hither, and rid the kingdom of those pernicious and loquacious animals.

"I have at length received your poem out of Mr. Addison's hands, which shall be sent as soon as you order it, and in what manner you shall appoint. I shall in the mean time give Mr. Tooke a packet for you, consisting of divers merry pieces. Mr. Gay's new farce,[1] Mr. Burnet's 'Letter to Mr. Pope,' Mr. Pope's 'Temple of Fame,' Mr. Thomas Burnet's 'Grumbler on Mr. Gay,' and the Bishop of Ailsbury's 'Elegy,' written either by Mr. Cary or some other hand.

"Mr. Pope is reading a letter; and, in the mean time, I make use of the pen to testify my uneasiness in not hearing from you. I find success, even in the most trivial things, raises the indignation of scribblers; for I, for my 'What-d'ye-call-it,' could neither escape the fury of Mr. Burnet, or the German Doctor; then where will rage end, when Homer is to be translated? Let Zoilus hasten to your friend's assistance, and envious criticism shall be no more. I am in hopes that we may order our affairs so as to meet this summer at the Bath; for Mr. Pope and myself have thoughts of taking a trip thither. You shall preach, and we will write lampoons; for it is esteemed as great an honor to leave the Bath for fear of a broken head, as for a Terræ Filius of Oxford to be expelled. I have no place at court; therefore, that I may not entirely be without one everywhere, show that I have a place in your remembrance.—Yours, etc.,

"A. Pope and J. Gay.

"Homer will be published in three weeks."[2]

*** I cannot finish this trifle without returning my sincerest acknowledgments to Sir John Parnell for the generous assistance he was pleased to give me, in furnishing me with many materials, when he heard I was about writing the life of his uncle; as also to Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, relations of our poet; and to my very good friend Mr. Steevens,[3] who, being an ornament to letters himself, is very ready to assist all the attempts of others.

[1] "What-d'ye-call-it," acted for the first time 23d of February, 1715.

[2] The first volume of the "Iliad" was published in June, 1715.

[3] George Steevens.

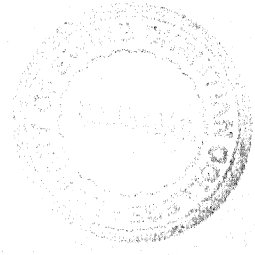
THE LIFE

OF

HENRY ST. JOHN.

LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE.

London:
Printed for T. Davies, in Russel Street, Covent Garden.
MDCCLXX.
[8vo, pp. 113.]



This hurried and imperfect biography was prefixed to an edition of the once celebrated "Dissertation on Parties," published by Davies in 1770. It also appeared the same year as a separate publication, and in 1774 was prefixed to an edition of Bolingbroke's Works.

The "Life of Bolingbroke" appeared anonymously.

The amplest "Life of Lord Bolingbroke" is that by George Wingrove Cooke; 2 vols. 8vo, 1835; but it is poorly written.

LIFE OF LORD BOLINGBROKE.

THERE are some characters that seem formed by nature to take delight in struggling with opposition, and whose most agreeable hours are passed in storms of their own creating. The subject of the present sketch was, perhaps, of all others the most indefatigable in raising himself enemies, to show his power in subduing them; and was not less employed in improving his superior talents than in finding objects on which to exercise their activity. His life was spent in a continual conflict of politics; and, as if that was too short for the combat, he has left his memory as a subject of lasting contention.

It is, indeed, no easy matter to preserve an acknowledged impartiality, in talking of a man so differently regarded on account of his political as well as his religious principles. Those whom his politics may please, will be sure to condemn him for his religion; and, on the contrary, those most strongly attached to his theological opinions, are the most likely to decry his politics. On whatever side he is regarded, he is sure to have opposers; and this was perhaps what he most desired, having from nature a mind better pleased with the struggle than the victory.

Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, was born in the year 1672,[1] at Battersea, in Surrey, at a seat that had been in the possession of his ancestors for ages before. His family was of the first rank, equally conspicuous for its antiquity, dignity, and large possessions. It is found to trace its original as high as Adam de Port, Baron of Basing, in Hampshire, before the Conquest; and in a succession of ages to have produced warriors, patriots, and statesmen, some of whom were conspicuous for their loyalty, and others for their defend-

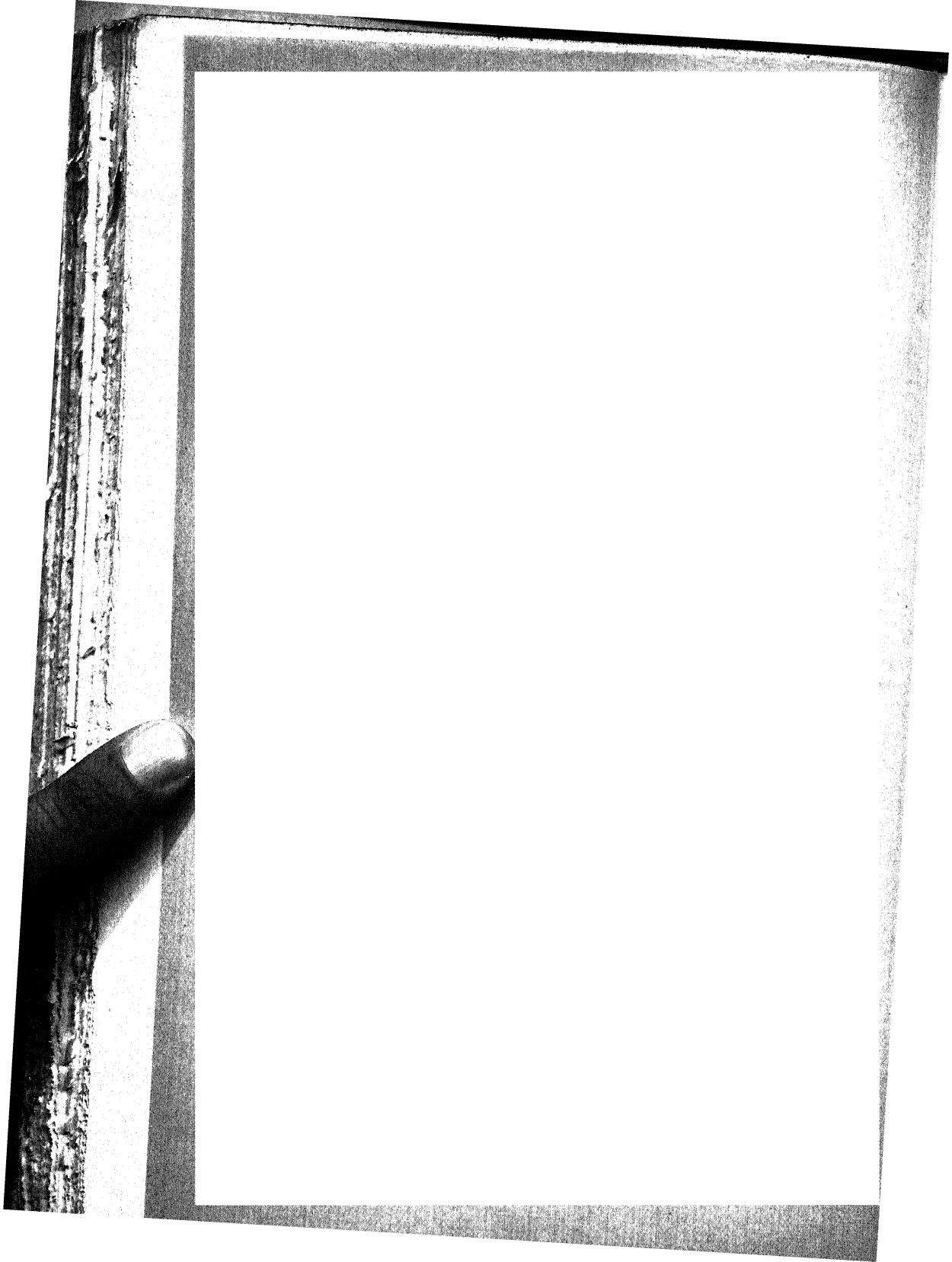
[1] Goldsmith copies the received accounts. It appears, however, by the parish register of Battersea that Lord Bolingbroke was baptized 10th of October, 1678. His age as stated on his monument also agrees with the entry of his baptism in the register.

ing the rights of the people. His grandfather, Sir Walter St. John, of Battersea, married one of the daughters of Lord Chief-justice St. John, who, as all know, was strongly attached to the republican party. Henry, the subject of the present Memoir, was brought up in his family, and consequently imbibed the first principles of his education amongst the Dissenters. At that time, Daniel Burgess, a fanatic of a very peculiar kind, being at once possessed of zeal and humor, and as well known for the archness of his conceits as the furious obstinacy of his principles, was confessor in the Presbyterian way to his grandmother, and was appointed to direct our author's first studies. Nothing is so apt to disgust a feeling mind as mistaken zeal; and, perhaps, the absurdity of the first lectures he received might have given him that contempt for all religions, which he might justly have conceived against one. Indeed, no task can be more mortifying than what he was condemned to undergo: "I was obliged," says he, in one place, "while yet a boy, to read over the commentaries of Dr. Manton, whose pride it was to have made a hundred and nineteen sermons on the hundred and nineteenth Psalm." Dr. Manton and his sermons were not likely to prevail much on one who was, perhaps, the most sharp-sighted in the world at discovering the absurdities of others, however he might have been guilty of establishing many of his own.

But these dreary institutions were of no very long continuance; as soon as it was fit to take him out of the hands of the women, he was sent to Eton School, and removed thence to Christ Church College, in Oxford. His genius and understanding were seen and admired in both these seminaries; but his love of pleasure had so much the ascendency, that he seemed contented rather with the consciousness of his own great powers than their exertion. However, his friends, and those who knew him most intimately, were thoroughly sensible of the extent of his mind; and when he left the university he was considered as one who had the fairest opportunity of making a shining figure in active life.

Nature seemed not less kind to him in her external embellishments than in adorning his mind. With the graces of a handsome person, and a face in which dignity was happily blended with sweetness, he had a manner of address that was very engaging. His vivacity was always awake, his apprehension was quick, his wit refined, and his memory amazing; his subtlety in thinking and reasoning was profound; and all these talents were adorned with an elocution that was irresistible.


Bolingbroke





To the assemblage of so many gifts from Nature, it was expected that Art would soon give her finishing hand; and that a youth, begun in excellence, would soon arrive at perfection; but such is the perverseness of human nature, that an age which should have been employed in the acquisition of knowledge was dissipated in pleasure; and instead of aiming to excel in praiseworthy pursuits, Bolingbroke seemed more ambitious of being thought the greatest rake about town. This period might have been compared to that of fermentation in liquors, which grow muddy before they brighten; but it must also be confessed, that those liquors which never ferment are seldom clear.[1] In this state of disorder he was not without his lucid intervals; and even while he was noted for keeping Miss Gumley, the most expensive prostitute in the kingdom, and bearing the greatest quantity of wine without intoxication, he even then despised his paltry ambition. "The love of study," says he, "and desire of knowledge, were what I felt all my life; and though my genius, unlike the demon of Socrates, whispered so softly, that very often I heard him not in the hurry of those passions with which I was transported, yet some calmer hours there were, and in them I hearkened to him." These sacred admonitions were indeed very few, since his excesses are remembered to this very day. I have spoken to an old man who assured me that he saw him and one of his companions run naked through the Park in a fit of intoxication; but then it was a time when public decency might be transgressed with less danger than at present.

During this period, as all his attachments were to pleasure, so his studies only seemed to lean that way. His first attempts were in poetry, in which he discovers more wit than taste, more labor than harmony in his versification. We have a copy of his verses prefixed to Dryden's "Virgil," complimenting the poet, and praising his translation. We have another, not so well known, prefixed to a French work, published in Holland by the Chevalier de St. Hyacinth, entitled, "Le Chef d'Œuvre d'un Inconnu." This performance is a humorous piece of criticism upon a miserable old ballad; and Bolingbroke's compliment, though written in English, is printed in Greek characters, so that at the first glance it may deceive the eye, and be mistaken for real Greek. There are two or three things more of his composition, which have appeared since his death, but which neither do honor to his parts or memory.

[1] See Vol. III. p. 48.

In this mad career of pleasure he continued for some time; but at length, in 1700, when he arrived at the twenty-eighth year of his age,[1] he began to take a dislike to his method of living, and to find that sensual pleasure alone was not sufficient to make the happiness of a reasonable creature. He therefore made his first effort to break from his state of infatuation, by marrying the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Henry Winchescomb, a descendant from the famous Jack of Newbury, who, though but a clothier, in the reign of Henry VIII. was able to entertain the King and all his retinue in the most splendid manner. This lady was possessed of a fortune exceeding forty thousand pounds, and was not deficient in mental accomplishments; but whether he was not yet fully satiated with his former pleasures, or whether her temper was not conformable to his own, it is certain they were far from living happily together. After cohabiting for some time together, they parted by mutual consent, both equally displeased; he complaining of the obstinacy of her temper, she of the shamelessness of his infidelity. A great part of her fortune some time after, upon his attainder, was given her back; but, as her family estates were settled upon him, he enjoyed them after her death, upon the reversal of his attainder.

Having taken a resolution to quit the allurements of pleasure for the stronger attractions of ambition, soon after his marriage he procured a seat in the House of Commons, being elected for the borough of Wotton-Basset, in Wiltshire, his father having served several times for the same place. Besides his natural endowments and his large fortune, he had other very considerable advantages that gave him weight in the senate, and seconded his views of preferment. His grandfather, Sir Walter St. John, was still alive;[2] and that gentleman's interest was so great in his own county of Wilts, that he represented it in two Parliaments in a former reign. His father, also, was then the representative for the same; and the interest of his wife's family in the House was very extensive. Thus Bolingbroke took his seat with many accidental helps; but his chief and great resource lay in his own extensive abilities.

At that time the Whig and the Tory parties were strongly opposed in the House, and pretty nearly balanced. In the latter years of King

[1] No; twenty-second. See p. 179.

[2] Sir Walter St. John was buried at Battersea, 9th of July, 1708. He died aged 87.

William, the Tories, who from every motive were opposed to the court, had been gaining popularity, and now began to make a public stand against their competitors. Robert Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, a staunch and confirmed Tory, was, in the year 1700, chosen Speaker of the House of Commons, and was continued in the same upon the accession of Queen Anne, the year ensuing. Bolingbroke had all along been bred up, as was before observed, among the Dissenters; his friends leaned to that persuasion, and all his connections were in the Whig interest. However, either from principle, or from perceiving the Tory party to be then gaining ground, while the Whigs were declining, he soon changed his connections, and joined himself to Harley, for whom then he had the greatest esteem; nor did he bring him his vote alone, but his opinion, which, even before the end of his first session, he rendered very considerable, the House perceiving even in so young a speaker the greatest eloquence, united with the profoundest discernment. The year following he was again chosen anew for the same borough, and persevered in his former attachments, by which he gained such an authority and influence in the House that it was thought proper to reward his merit; and, on the 10th of April, 1704, he was appointed Secretary at War and of the Marine; his friend Harley having a little before been made Secretary of State.

The Tory party being thus established in power, it may easily be supposed that every method would be used to depress the Whig interest, and to prevent it from rising; yet so much justice was done even to merit in an enemy, that the Duke of Marlborough, who might be considered as at the head of the opposite party, was supplied with all the necessaries for carrying on the war in Flanders with vigor; and it is remarkable that the greatest events of his campaign, such as the battles of Blenheim and Ramilies, and several glorious attempts made by the duke to shorten the war by some decisive action, fell out while Bolingbroke was Secretary at War. In fact he was a sincere admirer of that great general, and avowed it upon all occasions to the last moment of his life: he knew his faults, he admired his virtues, and had the boast of being instrumental in giving lustre to those triumphs by which his own power was in a manner overthrown.

As the affairs of the nation were then in as fluctuating a state as at present, Harley, after maintaining the lead for above three years, was in his turn obliged to submit to the Whigs, who once more became the prevailing party, and he was compelled to resign the seals. The

friendship between him and Bolingbroke seemed at this time to have been sincere and disinterested; for the latter chose to follow his fortune, and the next day resigned his employments in the administration, following his friend's example, and setting an example at once of integrity and moderation.[1] As an instance of this, when his coadjutors, the Tories, were for carrying a violent measure in the House of Commons, in order to bring the Princess Sophia into England, Bolingbroke so artfully opposed it that it dropped without a debate. For this his moderation was praised, but perhaps at the expense of his sagacity.

For some time the Whigs seemed to have gained a complete triumph, and upon the election of a new Parliament, in the year 1708, Bolingbroke was not returned. The interval which followed, of above two years, he employed in the severest study; and this recluse period he ever after used to consider as the most active and serviceable of his whole life. But his retirement was soon interrupted by the prevailing of his party once more: for the Whig Parliament being dissolved in the year 1710, he was again chosen; and, Harley being made Chancellor and Under-treasurer of the Exchequer, the important post of Secretary of State was given to our author, in which he discovered a degree of genius and assiduity that perhaps have never been known to be united in one person to the same degree.

The English annals scarcely produce a more trying juncture, or one that required such various abilities to regulate. He was then placed in a sphere where he was obliged to conduct the machine of state, struggling with a thousand various calamities; a desperate and enraged party, whose characteristic it has ever been to bear none in power but themselves; a war conducted by an able general, his professed opponent, and whose victories only tended to render him every day more formidable; a foreign enemy, possessed of endless resources,

[1] "Soon after Lord Bolingbroke resigned the office of Secretary at War, in 1707–8, he was telling some of his friends, over a bottle, that he would retire into the country, and lead there a philosophic life for the remainder of his days; on which, it is said, Lord Lansdowne made extempore the following lines:

"'From business and the noisy town retir'd,
Nor vex'd with love, nor with ambition fir'd,
Patient he'll wait till Charon bring his boat,
Still drinking like a fish and amorous as a goat.'"

—MS. note in a volume in the library of the Earl of Cawdor, by an ancestor of that nobleman.

and seeming to gather strength from every defeat; an insidious alliance, that wanted only to gain the advantage of victory, without contributing to the expenses of the combat; a weak, declining mistress, that was led by every report, and seemed ready to listen to whatever was said against him; still more, a gloomy, indolent, and suspicious colleague, that envied his power, and hated him for his abilities: these were a part of the difficulties that Bolingbroke had to struggle with in office, and under which he was to conduct the treaty of the peace of Utrecht, which was considered as one of the most complicated negotiations that history can afford. But nothing seemed too great for his abilities and industry: he set himself to the undertaking with spirit: he began to pave the way to the intended treaty by making the people discontented at the continuance of the war. For this purpose he employed himself in drawing up accurate computations of the numbers of our own men, and that of foreigners, employed in its destructive progress; he even wrote in the *Examiners*, and other periodical papers of the times, showing how much of the burden rested upon England, and how little was sustained by those who falsely boasted their alliance.

By these means, and after much debate in the House of Commons, the Queen received a petition from Parliament showing the hardships the allies had put upon England in carrying on this war, and consequently how necessary it was to apply relief to so ill-judged a connection. It may be easily supposed that the Dutch, against whom this petition was chiefly levelled, did all that was in their power to oppose it; many of the foreign courts also, with whom he had any transactions, were continually at work to defeat the minister's intentions. Memorial was delivered after memorial; the people of England, the Parliament, and all Europe, were made acquainted with the injustice and the dangers of such a proceeding; however, Bolingbroke went on with steadiness and resolution; and although the attacks of his enemies at home might have been deemed sufficient to employ his attention, yet he was obliged, at the same time that he furnished materials to the Press in London, to furnish instructions to all our ministers and ambassadors abroad, who would do nothing but in pursuance of his directions. As an orator in the senate, he exerted all his eloquence: he stated all the great points that were brought before the House: he answered the objections that were made by the leaders of the opposition; and all this with such success that even his enemies, while they opposed his power, acknowledged his abilities. Indeed,

such were the difficulties he had to encounter, that we find him acknowledging himself, some years after, that he never looked back on this great event, passed as it was, without a secret emotion of mind, when he compared the vastness of the undertaking, and the importance of the success, with the means employed to bring it about, and with those which were employed to frustrate his intentions.

While he was thus industriously employed, he was not without the rewards that deserved to follow such abilities, joined to so much assiduity. In July, 1712, he was created Baron St. John of Lidyard Tregoze, in Wiltshire, and Viscount Bolingbroke; by the last of which titles he is now generally known, and is likely to be talked of by posterity; he was also the same year appointed Lord-lieutenant of the county of Essex. By the titles of Tregoze and Bolingbroke he united the honors of the elder and younger branch of his family, and thus transmitted into one channel the opposing interest of two races, that had been distinguished, one for their loyalty to King Charles I., the other for their attachment to the Parliament that opposed him. It was afterward his boast, that he steered clear of the extremes for which his ancestors had been distinguished; having kept the spirit of freedom of the one, and acknowledged the subordination that distinguished the other.

Bolingbroke, being thus raised very near the summit of power, began to perceive more nearly the defects of him who was placed there. He now began to find that Lord Oxford, whose party he had followed, and whose person he had esteemed, was by no means so able or so industrious as he supposed him to be. He now began from his heart to renounce the friendship which he once had for his coadjutor; he began to imagine him treacherous, mean, indolent, and invidious; he even began to ascribe his own promotion to Oxford's hatred, and to suppose that he was sent up to the House of Lords only to render him contemptible. These suspicions were partly true, and partly suggested by Bolingbroke's own ambition: being sensible of his own superior importance and capacity, he could not bear to see another take the lead in public affairs, when he knew they owed their chief success to his own management. Whatever might have been his motives, whether of contempt, hatred, or ambition, it is certain an irreconcilable breach began between these two leaders of their party; their mutual hatred was so great that even their own common interest, the vigor of their negotiations, and the safety of their friends were entirely sacrificed to it. It was in vain that Swift, who was ad-

mitted into their counsels, urged the unreasonable impropriety of their disputes; that, while they were thus at variance within the walls, the enemy were making irreparable breaches without. Bolingbroke's antipathy was so great, that even success would have been hateful to him if Lord Oxford were to be a partner. He abhorred him to that degree that he could not bear to be joined with him in any case; and even some time after, when the lives of both were aimed at, he could not think of concerting measures with him for their mutual safety, preferring even death itself to the appearance of a temporary friendship.

Nothing could have been more weak and injudicious than their mutual animosities at this juncture; and it may be asserted with truth, that men who were unable to suppress or conceal their resentments upon such a trying occasion were unfit to take the lead in any measures, be their industry or their abilities ever so great. In fact, their dissensions were soon found to involve not only them but their party in utter ruin: their hopes had for some time been declining; the Whigs were daily gaining ground, and the Queen's death soon after totally destroyed all their schemes with their power.

Upon the accession of George I. to the throne,[1] danger began to threaten the late ministry on every side: whether they had really intentions of bringing in the Pretender, or whether the Whigs made it a pretence for destroying them, is uncertain; but the King very soon began to show that they were to expect neither favor nor mercy at his hands. Upon his landing at Greenwich, when the court came to wait upon him, and Lord Oxford among the number, he studiously avoided taking any notice of him, and testified his resentment by the caresses he bestowed upon the members of the opposite faction. A regency had been some time before appointed to govern the kingdom, and Addison was made Secretary. Bolingbroke still maintained his place of State Secretary, but subject to the contempt of the great and the insults of the mean. The first step taken by them to mortify him was to order all letters and packets directed to the Secretary of State to be sent to Mr. Addison; so that Bolingbroke was in fact removed from his office, that is, the execution of it, in two days after the Queen's death. But this was not the worst; for his mortifications were continually heightened by the daily humiliation of waiting at the door of the apartment where the regency sat, with a bag in his

[1] 1st of August, 1714.

hand, and being all the time, as it were, exposed to the insolence of those who were tempted by their natural malevolence, or who expected to make their court to those in power by abusing him.

Upon this sudden turn of fortune, when the seals were taken from him, he went into the country; and having received a message from court to be present when the seal was taken from the door of the Secretary's office, he excused himself, alleging that so trifling a ceremony might as well be performed by one of the under-secretaries, but at the same time requested the honor of kissing the King's hand, to whom he testified the utmost submission. This request, however, was rejected with disdain; the King had been taught to regard him as an enemy, and threw himself entirely on the Whigs for safety and protection.

The new Parliament, mostly composed of Whigs, met the 17th of March, and in the King's speech from the throne many inflaming hints were given, and many methods of violence were chalked out to the two houses. "The first step," says Lord Bolingbroke, speaking on this occasion, "in both were perfectly answerable; and, to the shame of the peerage be it spoken, I saw at that time several lords concur to condemn, in one general vote, all that they had approved in a former Parliament by many particular resolutions. Amongst several bloody resolutions proposed and agitated at this time, the resolution of impeaching me of high treason was taken, and I took that of leaving England, not in a panic terror, improved by the artifices of the Duke of Marlborough, whom I knew even at that time too well to act by his advice or information in any case, but on such grounds as the proceedings which soon followed sufficiently justified, and such as I have never repented building upon. Those who blamed it in the first heat were soon afterwards obliged to change their language: for what other resolution could I take? The method of prosecution designed against me would have put me out of a condition immediately to act for myself, or to serve those who were less exposed than me, but who were, however, in danger. On the other hand, how few were there on whose assistance I could depend, or to whom I would even in these circumstances be obliged? The ferment in the nation was wrought up to a considerable height; but there was at that time no reason to expect that it could influence the proceedings in Parliament in favor of those who should be accused: left to its own movement, it was much more proper to quicken than slacken the prosecutions; and who was there to guide its motions? The Tories, who had been true to

one another to the last, were a handful, and no great vigor could be expected from them; the Whimsicals,[1] disappointed of the figure which they hoped to make, began indeed to join their old friends. One of the principal amongst them, namely, the Earl of Anglesea, was so very good as to confess to me that, if the court had called the servants of the late Queen to account, and stopped there, he must have considered himself as a judge, and acted according to his conscience on what should have appeared to him; but that war had been declared to the whole Tory party, and that now the state of things was altered. This discourse needed no commentary, and proved to me that I had never erred in the judgment I made of this set of men. Could I then resolve to be obliged to them, or to suffer with Oxford? As much as I still was heated by the disputes, in which I had been all my life engaged against the Whigs, I would sooner have chosen to owe my security to their indulgence, than to the assistance of the Whimsicals; but I thought banishment, with all her train of evils, preferable to either."

Such was the miserable situation to which he was reduced on this occasion! Of all the number of his former flatterers and dependents, scarcely was one found remaining. Every hour brought fresh reports of his alarming situation, and the dangers which threatened him and his party on all sides. Prior, who had been employed in negotiating the treaty of Utrecht, was come over to Dover, and promised to reveal all he knew. The Duke of Marlborough planted his creatures round his lordship, who artfully endeavored to increase the danger; and an impeachment was actually preparing, in which he was accused of high-treason. It argued, therefore, no degree of timidity in his lordship to take the first opportunity to withdraw from danger, and to suffer the first boilings of popular animosity to quench the flame that had been raised against him. Accordingly, having made a gallant show of despising the machinations against him; having appeared in a very unconcerned manner at the play-house in Drury Lane, and having bespoke another play for the night ensuing; having subscribed to a new opera that was to be acted some time after, and talking of making an elaborate defence, he went off that same night in disguise to Dover, as a servant to Levigne, a messenger belonging to the French King;

[1] "*Whimsicals* were Tories who had been eager for the conclusion of the peace till the treaties were perfected; then they could come up to no direct approbation. In the clamor raised about the danger to the succession, they joined the Whigs." —BOLINGBROKE'S *Letter to Wyndham.*

and there one William Morgan, who had been a captain in General Hill's regiment of dragoons, hired a vessel and carried him over to Calais, where the Governor attended him in his coach, and carried him to his house with all possible distinction.

The news of Lord Bolingbroke's flight was soon known over the whole town, and the next day a letter from him to Lord Lansdowne was handed about in print to the following effect:

"My Lord,—I left the town so abruptly that I had no time to take leave of you or any of my friends. You will excuse me when you know that I had certain and repeated informations, from some who are in the secret of affairs, that a resolution was taken, by those who have power to execute it, to pursue me to the scaffold. My blood was to have been the cement of a new alliance, nor could my innocence be any security, after it had once been demanded from abroad, and resolved on at home, that it was necessary to cut me off. Had there been the least reason to hope for a fair and open trial, after having been already prejudged unheard by two houses of Parliament, I should not have declined the strictest examination. I challenge the most inveterate of my enemies to produce any one instance of a criminal correspondence, or the least corruption of any part of the administration in which I was concerned. If my zeal for the honor and dignity of my royal mistress, and the true interest of my country, have anywhere transported me to let slip a warm or unguarded expression, I hope the most favorable interpretation will be put upon it. It is a comfort that will remain with me in all my misfortunes that I served her Majesty faithfully and dutifully, in that especially which she had most at heart, relieving her people from a bloody and expensive war, and that I also have been too much an Englishman to sacrifice the interest of my country to any foreign ally; and it is for this crime only that I am now driven from thence. You shall hear more at large from me shortly. Yours," etc.

No sooner was it universally known that he was retired to France than his flight was construed into a proof of his guilt; and his enemies accordingly set about driving on his impeachment with redoubled alacrity. Mr., afterwards Sir Robert Walpole, who had suffered a good deal by his attachment to the Whig interest during the former reign, now undertook to bring in and conduct the charge against him in the House of Commons. His impeachment consisted of six articles,

which Walpole read to the House, in substance as follows: "First, that whereas the Lord Bolingbroke had assured the Dutch ministers that the Queen, his mistress, would make no peace but in concert with them, yet he had sent Mr. Prior to France that same year with proposals for a treaty of peace with that monarch, without the consent of the allies. Secondly, that he advised and promoted the making a separate treaty of convention with France, which was signed in September. Thirdly, that he disclosed to M. Mesnager, the French minister at London, this convention, which was the preliminary instructions to her Majesty's plenipotentiaries at Utrecht. Fourthly, that her Majesty's final instructions to her plenipotentiaries were disclosed by him to the Abbot Gualtier, who was an emissary of France. Fifthly, that he disclosed to the French the manner how Tournay, in Flanders, might be gained by them. And, lastly, that he advised and promoted the yielding up Spain and the West Indies to the Duke of Anjou, then an enemy to her Majesty." These were urged by Walpole with great vehemence, and aggravated with all the eloquence of which he was master. He challenged any person in behalf of the accused, and asserted that to vindicate were in a manner to share his guilt. In this universal consternation of the Tory party, none was for some time seen to stir; but at length General Ross, who had received favors from his lordship, boldly stood up and said he wondered that no man more capable was found to appear in defence of the accused. However, in attempting to proceed, he hesitated so much that he was obliged to sit down, observing that he would reserve what he had to say to another opportunity. It may easily be supposed that the Whigs found no great difficulty in passing the vote for his impeachment through the House of Commons. It was brought into that House on the 10th of June, 1715; it was sent up to the House of Lords on the 6th of August ensuing, and in consequence of which he was attainted by them of high-treason on the 10th of September. Nothing could be more unjust than such a sentence; but justice had been drowned in the spirit of party.

Bolingbroke, thus finding all hopes cut off at home, began to think of improving his wretched fortune upon the Continent. He had left England with a very small fortune, and his attainder totally cut off all resources for the future. In this depressed situation he began to listen to some proposals which were made him by the Pretender, who was then residing at Bar, in France, and who was desirous of admitting Bolingbroke into his secret councils. A proposal of this nature

had been made him shortly after his arrival at Paris, and before his attainder at home; but, while he had yet any hopes of succeeding in England, he absolutely refused, and made the best applications his ruined fortune would permit to prevent the extremity of his prosecution.

He had for some time waited for an opportunity of determining himself, even after he found it vain to think of making his peace at home. He let his Jacobite friends in England know that they had but to command him, and he was ready to venture in their service the little all that remained as frankly as he had exposed all that was gone. "At length," says he, talking of himself, "these commands came, and were executed in the following manner: The person who was sent to me arrived in the beginning of July, 1715, at the place where I had retired to in Dauphiné. He spoke in the name of all his friends whose authority could influence me; and he brought word that Scotland was not only ready to take arms, but under some sort of dissatisfaction to be withheld from beginning; that in England the people were exasperated against the government to such a degree that, far from wanting to be encouraged, they could not be restrained from insulting it on every occasion; that the whole Tory party was become avowedly Jacobites; that many officers of the army, and the majority of the soldiers, were well-affected to the cause; that the City of London was ready to rise, and that the enterprises for seizing of several places were ripe for execution; in a word, that most of the principal Tories were in a concert with the Duke of Ormond; for I had pressed particularly to be informed whether his grace acted alone, or if not, who were his council; and that the others were so disposed, that there remained no doubt of their joining as soon as the first blow should be struck. He added that my friends were a little surprised to observe that I lay neuter in such a conjuncture. He represented to me the danger I ran of being prevented by people of all sides from having the merit of engaging early in this enterprise, and how unaccountable it would be for a man, impeached and attainted under the present government, to take no share in bringing about a revolution, so near at hand and so certain. He entreated that I would defer no longer to join the Chevalier, to advise and assist in carrying on his affairs, and to solicit and negotiate at the court of France, where my friends imagined that I should not fail to meet a favorable reception, and from whence they made no doubt of receiving assistance in a situation of affairs so critical, so unexpected, and so promising. He

concluded by giving me a letter from the Pretender, whom he had seen in his way to me, in which I was pressed to repair without loss of time to Commercy; and this instance was grounded on the message which the bearer of the letter had brought me from England. In the progress of the conversation with the messenger, he related a number of facts which satisfied me as to the general disposition of the people; but he gave me little satisfaction as to the measures taken to improve this disposition, for driving the business on with vigor, if it tended to a revolution, or for supporting it to advantage, if it spun into a war. When I questioned him concerning several persons whose disinclination to the government admitted no doubt, and whose names, quality, and experience were very essential to the success of the undertaking, he owned to me that they kept a great reserve, and did at most but encourage others to act, by general and dark expressions. I received this account and this summons ill in my bed; yet, important as the matter was, a few minutes served to determine me. The circumstances wanting to form a reasonable inducement to engage did not excuse me; but the smart of a bill of attainder tingled in every vein, and I looked on my party to be under oppression, and to call for my assistance. Besides which, I considered first that I should be certainly informed, when I conferred with the Chevalier, of many particulars unknown to this gentleman; for I did not imagine that the English could be so near to take up arms as he represented them to be, on no other foundation than that which he exposed."

In this manner, having for some time debated with himself, and taken his resolution, he lost no time in repairing to the Pretender at Commercy, and took the seals of that nominal king, as he had formerly those of his potent mistress. But this was a terrible falling off indeed; and the very first conversation he had with this weak projector gave him the most unfavorable expectations of future success. "He talked to me," says his lordship, "like a man who expected every moment to set out for England or Scotland, but who did not very well know for which; and when he entered into the particulars of his affairs, I found that concerning the former he had nothing more circumstantial or positive to go upon than what I have already related. But the Duke of Ormond had been for some time, I cannot say how long, engaged with the Chevalier; he had taken the direction of this whole affair, as far as it related to England, upon himself; and had received a commission for this purpose, which contained the most ample powers that could be given. But still, however, all was unset-

tled, undetermined, and ill-understood. The Duke had asked from France a small body of forces, a sum of money, and a quantity of ammunition; but to the first part of the request he received a flat denial, but was made to hope that some arms and some ammunition might be given. This was but a very gloomy prospect; yet hope swelled the depressed party so high that they talked of nothing less than an instant and ready revolution. It was their interest to be secret and industrious; but, rendered sanguine by their passions, they made no doubt of subverting a government with which they were angry, and gave as great an alarm as would have been imprudent at the eve of the general insurrection."

Such was the state of things when Bolingbroke arrived to take up his new office at Commercy; and although he saw the deplorable state of the party with which he was embarked, yet he resolved to give his affairs the best complexion he was able, and set out for Paris, in order to procure from that court the necessary succors for his new master's invasion of England. But his reception and negotiations at Paris were still more unpromising than those at Commercy; and nothing but absolute infatuation seemed to dictate every measure taken by the party. He there found a multitude of people at work, and every one doing what seemed good in his own eyes; no subordination, no order, no concert. The Jacobites had wrought one another up to look upon the success of the present designs as infallible: every meeting-house which the populace demolished, as he himself says, every little drunken riot which happened, served to confirm them in these sanguine expectations; and there was hardly one amongst them who would lose the air of contributing by his intrigues to the restoration, which he took for granted would be brought about in a few weeks. "Care and hope," says our author very humorously, "sat on every busy Irish face; those who could read and write had letters to show, and those who had not arrived to this pitch of erudition had their secrets to whisper. No sex was excluded from this ministry: Fanny Oglethorpe kept her corner in it; and Olive Trant, a woman of the same mixed reputation, was the great wheel of this political machine. The ridiculous correspondence was carried on with England by people of like importance, and who were busy in sounding the alarm in the ears of an enemy whom it was their interest to surprise."

By these means, as he himself continues to inform us, the government of England was put on its guard; so that before he came to

Paris what was doing had been discovered. The little armament made at Havre de Grace, which furnished the only means to the Pretender of landing on the coasts of Britain, and which had exhausted the treasury of St. Germains, was talked of publicly. The Earl of Stair, the English minister at that city, very soon discovered its destination, and all the particulars of the intended invasion; the names of the persons from whom supplies came, and who were particularly active in the design, were whispered about at tea-tables and coffee-houses. In short, what by the indiscretion of the projectors, what by the private interests and ambitious views of the French, the most private transactions came to light; and such of the more prudent plotters, who supposed that they had trusted their heads to the keeping of one or two friends, were in reality at the mercy of numbers. "Into such company," exclaims our noble writer, "was I fallen for my sins." Still, however, he went on, steering in the wide ocean without a compass, till the death of Louis XIV. and the arrival of the Duke of Ormond at Paris rendered all his endeavors abortive; yet, notwithstanding these unfavorable circumstances, he still continued to despatch several messages and directions for England, to which he received very evasive and ambiguous answers.

Amongst the number of these he drew up a paper at Chaville, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, Marshal Berwick, and De Torcy, which was sent to England just before the death of the King of France, representing that France could not answer the demands of their memorial, and praying directions what to do. A reply to this came to him through the French Secretary of State, wherein they declared themselves unable to say anything till they saw what turn affairs would take on the death of the King, which had reached their ears. Upon another occasion a message coming from Scotland to press the Chevalier to hasten their rising, he despatched a messenger to London to the Earl of Mar, to tell him that the concurrence of England in the insurrection was ardently wished and expected; but instead of that nobleman's waiting for instructions, he had already gone into the Highlands, and there actually put himself at the head of his clans. After this, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, he despatched one Mr. Hamilton, who got all the papers by heart, for fear of a miscarriage, to their friends in England, to inform them that, though the Chevalier was destitute of succor, and all reasonable hopes of it, yet he would land as they pleased in England or Scotland at a minute's warning; and therefore they might rise immediately after they

had sent despatches to him. To this message Mr. Hamilton returned very soon with an answer given by Lord Lansdowne, in the name of all the persons privy to the secret, that since affairs grew daily worse, and would not mend by delay, the malcontents in England had resolved to declare immediately, and would be ready to join the Duke of Ormond on his landing: adding that his person would be as safe in England as in Scotland, and that in every other respect it was better he should land in England; that they had used their utmost endeavors, and hoped the Western counties would be in a good posture to receive him; and that he should land as near as possible to Plymouth. With these assurances the Duke embarked, though he had heard before of the seizure of many of his most zealous adherents, of the dispersion of many more, and the consternation of all; so that upon his arrival at Plymouth, finding nothing in readiness, he returned to Brittany.

In these circumstances the Pretender himself sent to have a vessel got ready for him at Dunkirk, in which he went to Scotland, leaving Lord Bolingbroke all this while at Paris, to try if by any means some assistance might not be procured, without which all hopes of success were at an end. It was during this negotiation upon this miserable proceeding that he was sent for by Mrs. Trant (a woman who had for some time before ingratiated herself with the Regent of France, by supplying him with mistresses from England), to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where she lived with Mademoiselle Chausery, an old superannuated waiting-woman belonging to the Regent. By these he was acquainted with the measures they had taken for the service of the Duke of Ormond; although Bolingbroke, who was actual secretary to the negotiation, had never been admitted to a confidence in their secrets. He was, therefore, a little surprised at finding such mean agents employed without his privity, and very soon found them utterly unequal to the task. He quickly, therefore, withdrew himself from such wretched auxiliaries, and the Regent himself seemed pleased at his defection.

In the mean time the Pretender set sail from Dunkirk for Scotland; and though Bolingbroke had all along perceived that his cause was hopeless, and his projects ill-designed; although he had met with nothing but opposition and disappointment in his service; yet he considered that this of all others was the time he could not be permitted to relax in the cause. He now, therefore, neglected no means, forgot no argument which his understanding could suggest, in apply-

ing to the court of France; but his success was not answerable to his industry. The King of France, not able to furnish the Pretender with money himself, had written some time before his death to his grandson, the King of Spain, and had obtained from him a promise of forty thousand crowns. A small part of this sum had been received by the Queen's treasurer at St. Germains, and had been sent to Scotland, or employed to defray the expenses which were daily making on the coast; at the same time Bolingbroke pressed the Spanish ambassador at Paris, and solicited the minister at the court of Spain. He took care to have a number of officers picked out of the Irish troops which serve in France, gave them their routes, and sent a ship to receive and transport them to Scotland. Still, however, the money came in so slowly, and in such trifling sums, that it turned to little account, and the officers were on their way to the Pretender. At the same time he formed a design of engaging French privateers in the expedition, that were to have carried whatever should be necessary to send to any part of Britain in their first voyage, and then to cruise under the Pretender's commission. He had actually agreed for some, and had it in his power to have made the same bargain with others: Sweden on the one side, and Scotland on the other, could have afforded them retreats; and if the war had been kept up in any part of the mountains, this armament would have been of the utmost advantage. But all his projects and negotiations failed by the Pretender's precipitate return, who was not above six weeks in his expedition, and flew out of Scotland even before all had been tried in his defence.

The expedition being in this manner totally defeated, Bolingbroke now began to think that it was his duty as well as interest to save the poor remains of the disappointed party. He never had any great opinion of the Pretender's success before he set off; but when this adventurer had taken the last step which it was in his power to make, our Secretary then resolved to suffer neither him nor the Scotch to be any longer bubbles of their own credulity and of the French court. In a conversation he had with the Marshal de Huxelles, he took occasion to declare that he would not be the instrument of amusing the Scotch; and since he was able to do them no other service, he would at least inform them of what little dependence they might place upon assistance from France. He added that he would send them vessels, which, with those already on the coast of Scotland, might serve to bring off the Pretender, the Earl of Mar, and as many others as possible. The Marshal approved his resolution, and advised him to exe-

cute it, as the only thing which was left to do; but in the mean time the Pretender landed at Gravelines, and gave orders to stop all vessels bound on his account to Scotland; and Bolingbroke saw him in the morning after his arrival at St. Germains, and he received him with open arms.

As it was the Secretary's business, as soon as Bolingbroke heard of his return, he went to acquaint the French court with it; when it was recommended to him to advise the Pretender to proceed to Bar with all possible diligence: and in this measure Bolingbroke entirely concurred. But the Pretender himself was in no such haste; he had a mind to stay some time at St. Germains, and in the neighborhood of Paris, and to have a private meeting with the Regent: he accordingly sent Bolingbroke to solicit this meeting, who exerted all his influence in the negotiation. He wrote and spoke to the Marshal de Huxelles, who answered him by word of mouth and by letters, refusing him by both, and assuring him that the Regent said the things which were asked were puerilities, and swore he would not see him. The Secretary, no ways displeased with his ill-success, returned with this answer to his master, who acquiesced in this determination, and declared he would instantly set out for Lorraine, at the same time assuring Bolingbroke of his firm reliance on his integrity.

However, the Pretender, instead of taking post for Lorraine, as he had promised, went to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where his female ministers resided, and there continued for several days, seeing the Spanish and Swedish ministers, and even the Regent himself. It might have been in these interviews that he was set against his new Secretary, and taught to believe that he had been remiss in his duty and false to his trust. Be this as it will, a few days after the Duke of Ormond came to see Bolingbroke, and, having first prepared him for the surprise, put into his hands a note directed to the Duke, and a little scrip of paper directed to the Secretary: they were both in the Pretender's handwriting, and dated as if written by him on his way to Lorraine; but in this Bolingbroke was not to be deceived, who knew the place of his present residence. In one of these papers the Pretender declared that he had no further occasion for the Secretary's service; and the other was an order to him to give up the papers in his office; all which, he observes, might have been contained in a letter-case of a moderate size. He gave the Duke the seals, and some papers which he could readily come at; but for some others, in which there were several insinuations, under the Pretender's own hand,

reflecting upon the Duke himself, these he took care to convey by a safe hand, since it would have been very improper that the Duke should have seen them. As he thus gave up without scruple all the papers which remained in his hands, because he was determined never to make use of them, so he declares he took a secret pride in never asking for those of his own which were in the Pretender's hands; contenting himself with making the Duke understand how little need there was to get rid of a man in this manner, who only wanted an opportunity to get rid of the Pretender and his cause. In fact, if we survey the measures taken on the one side, and the abilities of the man on the other, it will not appear any way wonderful that he should be disgusted with a party who had neither principle to give a foundation to their hopes, union to advance them, nor abilities to put them in motion.

Bolingbroke, being thus dismissed from the Pretender's service, supposed that he had got rid of the trouble and the ignominy of so mean an employment at the same time; but he was mistaken: he was no sooner rejected from the office than articles of impeachment were preferred against him, in the same manner as he had before been impeached in England, though not with such effectual injury to his person and fortune. The articles of this impeachment by the Pretender were branched out into seven heads, in which he was accused of treachery, incapacity, and neglect. The first was that he was never to be found by those who came to him about business; and if by chance or stratagem they got hold of him, he affected being in a hurry, and by putting them off to another time still avoided giving them any answer. The second was, that the Earl of Mar complained by six different messengers at different times, before the Chevalier came from Dunkirk, of his being in want of arms and ammunition, and prayed a speedy relief; and though the things demanded were in my Lord's power, there was not so much as one pound of powder in any of the ships which by his Lordship's directions parted from France. Thirdly, the Pretender himself after his arrival sent General Hamilton to inform him that his want of arms and ammunition was such that he should be obliged to leave Scotland unless he received speedy relief; yet Lord Bolingbroke amused Mr. Hamilton twelve days together, and did not introduce him to any of the French ministers, though he was referred to them for a particular account of affairs; or so much as communicated his letters to the Queen, or anybody else. Fourthly, the Count de Castel Blanco had for several months at

Havre a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, and did daily ask his Lordship's orders how to dispose of them, but never got any instructions. Fifthly, the Pretender's friends at the French court had for some time past no very good opinion of his Lordship's integrity, and a very bad one of his discretion. Sixthly, at a time when many merchants in France would have carried privately any quantity of arms and ammunition into Scotland, his Lordship desired a public order for the embarkation; which, being a thing not to be granted, is said to have been done in order to urge a denial. Lastly, the Pretender wrote to his Lordship by every occasion after his arrival in Scotland; and though there were many opportunities of writing in return, yet from the time he landed there, to the day he left it, he never received any letter from his Lordship. Such were the articles, by a very extraordinary reverse of fortune, preferred against Lord Bolingbroke, in less than a year after similar articles were drawn up against him by the opposite party at home. It is not easy to find out what he could have done thus to disoblige all sides; but he had learned by this time to make out happiness from the consciousness of his own designs, and to consider all the rest of mankind as uniting in a faction to oppress virtue.

But though it was mortifying to be thus rejected on both sides, yet he was not remiss in vindicating himself from all. Against these articles of impeachment, therefore, he drew up an elaborate answer, in which he vindicates himself with great plausibility. He had long, as he asserts, wished to leave the Pretender's service, but was entirely at a loss how to conduct himself in so difficult a resignation; "but at length," says he, "the Pretender and his council disposed of things better for me than I could have done for myself. I had resolved, on his return from Scotland, to follow him till his residence should be fixed somewhere; after which, having served the Tories in this, which I looked upon as their last struggle for power, and having continued to act in the Pretender's affairs till the end of the term for which I embarked with him, I should have esteemed myself to be at liberty, and should, in the civilest manner I was able, have taken my leave of him. Had we parted thus, I should have remained in a very strange situation all the rest of my life; on one side he would have thought that he had a right on any future occasion to call me out of my retreat; the Tories would probably have thought the same thing; my resolution was taken to refuse them both, and I foresaw that both would condemn me: on the other side, the consideration of his hav-

ing kept measures with me, joined to that of having once openly declared for him, would have created a point of honor, by which I should have been tied down, not only from ever engaging against him, but also from making my peace at home. The Pretender cut this Gordian knot asunder at one blow; he broke the links of that chain which former engagements had fastened on me, and gave me a right to esteem myself as free from all obligations of keeping measures with him, as I should have continued if I had never engaged in his interest."

It is not to be supposed that one so very delicate to preserve his honor would previously have basely betrayed his employer; a man conscious of acting so infamous a part would have undertaken no defence, but let the accusations, which could not materially affect him, blow over, and wait for the calm that was to succeed in tranquillity. He appeals to all the ministers with whom he transacted business for the integrity of his proceedings at that juncture; and had he been really guilty, when he opposed the ministry here after his return, they would not have failed to brand and detect his duplicity. The truth is, that he perhaps was the most disinterested minister at that time in the Pretender's court, as he had spent great sums of his own money in his service, and never would be obliged to him for a farthing; in which case he believes that he was single. His integrity is much less impeachable on this occasion than his ambition; for all the steps he took may be fairly ascribed to his displeasure at having the Duke of Ormond and the Earl of Mar treated more confidentially than himself. It was his aim always to be foremost in every administration, and he could not bear to act as a subaltern in so paltry a court as that of the Pretender's.

At all periods of his exile he still looked towards home with secret regret, and had even taken every opportunity to apply to those in power, either to soften his prosecutions or lessen the number of his enemies at home. In accepting his office under the Pretender, he made it a condition to be at liberty to quit the post whenever he should think proper; and being now disgracefully dismissed, he turned his mind entirely towards making his peace in England, and employing all the unfortunate experience he had acquired to undeceive his Tory friends, and to promote the union and quiet of his native country. It was not a little favorable to his hopes that about this time, though unknown to him, the Earl of Stair, ambassador to the French court, had received full powers to treat with him whilst he

was engaged with the Pretender, but yet had never made him any proposals, which might be considered as the grossest outrage. But when the breach with the Pretender was universally known, the Earl sent one M. Saludin, a gentleman of Geneva, to Lord Bolingbroke, to communicate to him his Majesty King George's favorable disposition to grant him a pardon, and his own earnest desire to serve him as far as he was able. This was an offer by much too advantageous for Bolingbroke in his wretched circumstances to refuse; he embraced it, as became him to do, with all possible sense of the King's goodness and of the ambassador's friendship. They had frequent conferences shortly after upon the subject. The turn which the English ministry gave the matter was to enter into a treaty to reverse his attainder, and to stipulate the conditions on which this act of grace should be granted him; but this method of negotiation he would by no means submit to; the notion of a treaty shocked him, and he resolved never to be restored, rather than go that way to work. Accordingly, he opened himself without any reserve to Lord Stair, and told him that he looked upon himself obliged in honor and conscience to undeceive his friends in England, both as to the state of foreign affairs, as to the management of the Jacobite interest abroad, and as to the characters of the persons, in every one of which points he knew them to be most grossly and most dangerously deluded. He observed that the treatment he had received from the Pretender and his adherents would justify him to the world in doing this; that if he remained in exile all his life, he might be assured that he would never have more to do with the Jacobite cause; and that, if he were restored, he would give it an effectual blow, in making that apology which the Pretender had put him under a necessity of making; that in doing this he flattered himself that he should contribute something towards the establishment of the King's government, and to the union of his subjects. He added that, if the court thought him sincere in those professions, a treaty with him was unnecessary; and if they did not believe so, then a treaty would be dangerous to him. The Earl of Stair, who has also confirmed this account of Lord Bolingbroke's, in a letter to Mr. Craggs, readily came into his sentiments on this head, and soon after the King approved it upon their representations; he accordingly received a promise of pardon from George I., who, on the 2d of July, 1716, created his father Baron St. John of Battersea, in the county of Surrey, and Viscount St. John. This seemed preparatory to his own restoration; and, instead of prosecuting any further ambitious schemes

against the government, he rather began to turn his mind to philosophy; and since he could not gratify his ambition to its full extent, he endeavored to learn the arts of despising it. The variety of distressful events that had hitherto attended all his struggles at last had thrown him into a state of reflection, and this produced, by way of relief, a *consolatio philosophica*, which he wrote the same year, under the title of "Reflections upon Exile." In this piece, in which he professes to imitate the manner of Seneca, he with some wit draws his own picture, and represents himself as suffering persecution, for having served his country with abilities and integrity. A state of exile thus incurred he very justly shows to be rather honorable than distressful; and, indeed, there are few men who will deny that the company of strangers to virtue is better than the company of enemies to it. Besides this philosophical tract, he also wrote this year several Letters, in answer to the charges laid upon him by the Pretender and his adherents; and the following year he drew up a vindication of his whole conduct with respect to the Tories, in the form of a letter to Sir William Wyndham.

Nor was he so entirely devoted to the fatigues of business but that he gave pleasure a share in its pursuits. He had never much agreed with the lady he first married, and after a short cohabitation they separated, and lived ever after asunder. She therefore remained in England upon his going into exile, and by proper application to the throne was allowed a sufficient maintenance to support her with becoming dignity; however, she did not long survive his first disgrace;[1] and upon his becoming a widower he began to think of trying his fortune once more in a state which was at first so unfavorable. For this purpose he cast his eye on the widow of the Marquis of Vilette, a niece to the famous Madame Maintenon, a young lady of great merit and understanding, possessed of a very large fortune, but encumbered with a long and troublesome lawsuit.[2] In the company of this very sensible woman he passed his time in France, sometimes in the country, and sometimes at the capital, till the year 1723; in which, after the breaking up of the Parliament, his Majesty[3] was pleased to grant him a pardon as to his personal safety, but as yet neither restoring him to his family inheritance, his title, nor a seat in Parliament.

[1] She died 24th of October, 1718. See "Historical Register" for 1718, vol. iii.

[2] They were married in May, 1720.—COOKE, vol. ii. p. 41. She died before her husband, and was buried at Battersea.

[3] George I.

To obtain this favor had been the governing principle of his politics for some years before; and upon the first notice of his good fortune he prepared to return to his native country, where, however, his dearest connections were either dead, or declared themselves suspicious of his former conduct in support of their party. It is observable that Bishop Atterbury, who was banished at this time for a supposed treasonable correspondence in favor of the Tories, was set on shore at Calais just when Lord Bolingbroke arrived there on his return to England. So extraordinary a reverse of fortune could not fail of strongly affecting that good prelate, who observed with some emotion that he perceived himself to be exchanged: he presently left it to his auditors to imagine whether his country were the loser or the gainer by such an exchange.

Lord Bolingbroke, upon his return to his native country, began to make very vigorous applications for further favors from the Crown. His pardon, without the means of support, was but an empty, or perhaps it might be called a distressful, act of kindness, as it brought him back among his former friends in a state of inferiority his pride could not endure. However, his applications were soon after successful; for in about two years after his return he obtained an act of Parliament[1] to restore him to his family inheritance, which amounted to nearly three thousand pounds a year. He was also enabled by the same to possess any purchase he should make of any other estate in the kingdom; and he accordingly pitched upon a seat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley, near Uxbridge, in Middlesex, where he settled with his lady, and laid himself out to enjoy the rural pleasures in perfection, since the more glorious ones of ambition were denied him. With this resolution he began to improve his new purchase in a very peculiar style, giving it all the air of a country farm, and adorning even his hall with implements of husbandry. We have a sketch of his way of living in this retreat in a letter of Pope's to Swift, who omits no opportunity of representing his Lordship in the most amiable points of view. This letter is dated from Dawley,[2] the country farm above-mentioned, and begins thus:

[1] The reader who would wish to pursue this highly interesting portion of Bolingbroke's life should consult Lord Hervey's "Memoirs" (2 vols. 8vo., 1848), vol. i. pp. 12–22. It was in Lord Sunderland's administration, and by his mediation, that Bolingbroke obtained his recall; but he owed more to the dexterity of his wife, and a gift by her of £12,000 to Lady Walsingham, the niece of the Duchess of Kendal, or, as it is thought, the daughter of the Duchess by George I.

[2] June 28, 1728.

"I now hold the pen for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter between two hay-cocks; but his attention is somewhat diverted, by casting his eyes on the clouds, not in the admiration of what you say, but for fear of a shower. He is pleased with your placing him in the triumvirate between yourself and me; though he says he doubts he shall fare like Lepidus, while one of us runs away with all the power, like Augustus, and another with all the pleasures, like Antony. It is upon a foresight of this that he has fitted up his farm, and you will agree that his scheme of retreat is not founded upon weak appearances. Upon his return from Bath, all peccant humors, he finds, are purged out of him; and his great temperance and economy are so signal, that the first is fit for my constitution, and the latter would enable you to lay up so much money as to buy a bishopric in England.[1] As to the return of his health and vigor, were you here you might inquire of his hay-makers; but as to his temperance, I can answer that (for one whole day) we have had nothing for dinner but mutton broth, beans and bacon, and a barn-door fowl.

"Now his lordship is run after his cart, I have a moment left to myself to tell you that I overheard him yesterday agree with a painter, for two hundred pounds, to paint his country hall with trophies of rakes, spades, prongs, etc., and other ornaments, merely to countenance his calling this place a farm."

What Pope here says of his engagements with a painter was shortly after executed: the hall was painted, accordingly, in black crayons only, so that at first view it brought to mind the figures often seen scratched with charcoal, or the smoke of a candle, upon the kitchen walls of farm-houses. The whole, however, produced a most striking effect; and over the door at the entrance into it was this motto: *Satis beatus ruris honoribus.*[2] His lordship seemed to be extremely happy in this pursuit of moral tranquillity, and in the exultation of his heart could not fail of communicating his satisfaction to his friend Swift. "I am in my own farm," says he, "and here I shoot strong and tena-

[1] Lady Luxborough says that when her brother Lord Bolingbroke was living at Dawley, "he then kept £700 per annum in hand," that is, he saved so much.—LADY LUXBOROUGH'S *Letters to Shenstone*, 8vo, 1775, p. 170.

[2] "When my brother Bolingbroke built Dawley, which he chose to call a farm, he had his hall painted in stone-colors, with all the implements of husbandry placed in the manner one sees or might see arms and trophies in some general's hall; and it had an effect that pleased everybody. I believe Pope mentions it in one of his letters to Swift."—LADY LUXBOROUGH'S *Letters*, p. 22.

cious roots: I have caught hold of the earth, to use a gardener's phrase, and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an easy matter to transplant me again."

There is not, perhaps, a stronger instance in the world than his Lordship, that an ambitious mind can never be fairly subdued, but will still seek for those gratifications which retirement can never supply. All this time he was mistaken in his passion for solitude, and supposed that to be the child of philosophy which was only the effects of spleen: it was in vain that he attempted to take root in the shade of obscurity; he was originally bred in the glare of public occupation, and he secretly once more wished for transplantation. He was only a titular lord; he had not been thoroughly restored; and, as he was excluded from a seat in the House of Peers, he burned with impatience to play a part in that conspicuous theatre. Impelled by this desire, he could no longer be restrained in obscurity, but once more entered into the bustle of public business; and, disavowing all obligations to the minister, he embarked in the opposition against him, in which he had several powerful coadjutors; but previously he had taken care to prefer a petition to the House of Commons, desiring to be reinstated in his former emoluments and capacities. This petition at first occasioned very warm debates: Walpole, who pretended to espouse his cause, alleged that it was very right to admit him to his inheritance; and when Lord William Pawlet moved for a clause to disqualify him from sitting in either house, Walpole rejected the motion, secretly satisfied with a resolution which had been settled in the cabinet, that he should never more be admitted into any share of power. To this artful method of evading his pretensions Bolingbroke was no stranger; and he was now resolved to shake that power, which thus endeavored to obstruct the increase of his own: taking, therefore, his part in the opposition with Pulteney, while the latter engaged to manage the House of Commons, Bolingbroke undertook to enlighten the people.

Accordingly, he soon distinguished himself by a multitude of pieces, written during the latter part of George the First's reign, and likewise the beginning of that which succeeded. These were conceived with great vigor and boldness; and now, once more engaged in the service of his country, though disarmed, gagged, and almost bound, as he declared himself to be, yet he resolved not to abandon his cause, as long as he could depend on the firmness and integrity of those coadjutors who did not labor under the same disadvantages with himself. His

letters in a paper called *The Craftsman* were particularly distinguished in this political contest; and though several of the most expert politicians of the times joined in this paper, his essays were particularly relished by the public. However, it is the fate of things written for an occasion seldom to survive that occasion. *The Craftsman*, though written with great spirit and sharpness, is now almost forgotten, although, when it was published as a weekly paper, it sold much more rapidly than even *The Spectator*. Besides this work he published several other separate pamphlets, which were afterwards reprinted in the second edition of his Works, and which were very popular in their day. This political warfare continued for ten years, during which time he labored with great strength and perseverance, and drew up such a system of politics as some have supposed to be the most complete now existing. But, as upon all other occasions, he had the mortification once more to see those friends desert him upon whose assistance he most firmly relied, and all that web of fine-spun speculation actually destroyed at once, by the ignorance of some and the perfidy of others. He then declared that he was perfectly cured of his patriotic frenzy; he fell out not only with Pulteney for his selfish views, but with his old friends the Tories, for abandoning their cause as desperate; averring that the faint and unsteady exercise of parts on one side was a crime but one degree inferior to the iniquitous misapplication of them on the other. But he could not take leave of a controversy in which he had been so many years engaged without giving a parting blow, in which he seemed to summon up all his vigor at once; and where, as the poet says, "*Animam in vulnere posuit.*" This inimitable piece is entitled, "A Dissertation on Parties," and of all his masterly pieces it is in general esteemed the best.

Having finished this, which was received with the utmost avidity, he resolved to take leave, not only of his enemies and friends, but even of his country; and in this resolution, in the year 1736, he once more retired to France, where he looked to his native country with a mixture of anger and pity, and upon his former professing friends with a share of contempt and indignation. "I expect little," says he, "from the principal actors that tread the stage at present. They are divided, not so much as it seemed, and as they would have it believed, about measures: the true division is about their different ends. While the minister was not hard-pushed, nor the prospect of succeeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the government. The destruction of the minister was pursued only as a

preliminary, but of essential and indisputable necessity, to that end; but when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many, and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They had divided the skin, at least in their thought, before they had taken the beast. The common fear of hastening his downfall for others made them all faint in the chase. It was this, and this alone, that saved him, and put off his evil day."

Such were his cooler reflections, after he had laid down his political pen, to employ it in a manner that was much more agreeable to his usual professions and his approaching age. He had long employed the few hours he could spare on subjects of a more general and important nature to the interests of mankind; but as he was frequently interrupted by the alarms of party, he made no great proficiency in his design. Still, however, he kept it in view, and he makes frequent mention in his letters to Swift of his intentions to give metaphysics a new and useful turn. "I know," says he, in one of these, "how little regard you pay to writings of this kind; but I imagine that if you can like any, it must be those that strip metaphysics of all their bombast, keep within the sight of every well-constituted eye, and never bewilder themselves, whilst they pretend to guide the reason of others."

Having now arrived at the sixtieth year of his age, and being blessed with a very competent share of fortune, he returned into France, far from the noise and hurry of party; for his seat at Dawley was too near to devote the rest of his life to retirement and study. Upon his going to that country, as it was generally known that disdain, vexation, and disappointment had driven him there, many of his friends as well as his enemies supposed that he was once again gone over to the Pretender. Among the number who entertained this suspicion was Swift, whom Pope, in one of his letters, very roundly chides for harboring such an unjust opinion. "You should be cautious," says he, "of censuring any motion or action of my Lord Bolingbroke, because you hear it only from shallow, envious, or malicious reporters. What you write to me about him I find, to my great scandal, repeated in one of yours to ———. Whatever you might hint to me, was this for the profane? The thing, if true, should be concealed; but it is, I assure you, absolutely untrue in every circumstance. He has fixed in a very agreeable retirement near Fontainebleau, and makes it his whole business *vacare literis*."[1]

This reproof from Pope was not more friendly than it was true.

[1] Pope to Swift, August 17, 1736. The place was called Chantelou.

Lord Bolingbroke was too well acquainted with the forlorn state of that party and the folly of its conductors, once more to embark in their desperate concerns. He now saw that he had gone as far towards reinstating himself in the full possession of his former honors, as the mere dint of parts and application could go, and was at length experimentally convinced that the decree was absolutely irreversible, and the door of the House of Lords finally shut against him. He therefore, at Pope's suggestion, retired merely to be at leisure from the broils of opposition, for the calmer pleasures of philosophy.[1] Thus the decline of his life, though less brilliant, became more amiable; and even his happiness was improved by age, which had rendered his passions more moderate and his wishes more attainable.

But he was far from suffering, even in solitude, his hours to glide away in torpid inactivity. That active, restless disposition still continued to actuate his pursuits; and having lost the season for gaining power over his contemporaries, he was now resolved upon acquiring fame from posterity. He had not been long in his retreat near Fontainebleau, when he began a course of "Letters on the Study and Use of History," for the use of a young nobleman.[2] In these he does not follow the methods of St. Real and others who have treated on this subject, who make history the great fountain of all knowledge; he very wisely confines its benefits, and supposes them to consist in deducting general maxims from particular facts, than in illustrating maxims by the application of historical passages. In mentioning ecclesiastical history, he gives his opinion very freely upon the subject of the divine original of the sacred books, which he supposes to have no such foundation. This new system of thinking, which he had always propagated in conversation, and which he now began to

[1] He had been so marked by Sir Robert Walpole as caballing with foreign ministers against his own country in 1734, that Mr. Pulteney and other heads of the opposition recommended him to leave England, which he did in 1735, on seeing that the ministers were strong in the new Parliament.—Note in *Marchmont Papers*, vol. ii. p. 350. "I did not leave England in *thirty-five* till some schemes that were then on the loom—though they never came into effect—made me one too many, even to my intimate friends."—BOLINGBROKE *to Lord Marchmont*, Battersea, 24th July, 1746. Bolingbroke returned to England in the winter of 1743.

[2] Henry Hyde, Viscount Cornbury (died 1753), great-grandson of the celebrated Lord Chancellor Clarendon. He is celebrated by Pope:

"Disdain whatever Cornbury disdains."

Warburton was of opinion that this is the best of Bolingbroke's Works.—*Letters to Hurd*, p. 94.

adopt in his more labored compositions, seemed no way supported either by his acuteness or his learning. He began to reflect seriously on these subjects too late in life, and to suppose those objections very new and unanswerable which had been already confuted by thousands. "Lord Bolingbroke," says Pope, in one of his letters, "is above trifling; when he writes of anything in this world, he is more than mortal. If ever he trifles, it must be when he turns divine."

In the mean time, as it was evident that a man of his active ambition, in choosing retirement when no longer able to lead in public, must be liable to ridicule in resuming a resigned, philosophical air, in order to obviate the censure, he addressed a "Letter to Lord Bathurst upon the True Use of Retirement and Study;" in which he shows himself still able and willing to undertake the cause of his country, whenever its distresses should require his exertion. "I have," says he, "renounced neither my country nor my friends; and by friends I mean all those, and those alone, who are such to their country. In their prosperity they shall never hear of me; in their distress, always. In that retreat wherein the remainder of my days shall be spent I may be of some use to them, since even thence I may advise, exhort, and warn them." Bent upon this pursuit only, and having now exchanged the gay statesman for the grave philosopher, he shone forth with distinguished lustre. His conversation took a different turn from what had been usual with him; and, as we are assured by Lord Orrery, who knew him, it united the wisdom of Socrates, the dignity and ease of Pliny, and the wit of Horace.

Yet still, amidst his resolutions to turn himself from politics, and to give himself up entirely to the calls of philosophy, he could not resist embarking once more in the debates of his country; and coming back from France, settled at Battersea, an old seat which was his father's, and had been long in the possession of the family. He supposed he saw an impending calamity, and though it was not in his power to remove he thought it his duty to retard its fall. To redeem or save the nation from perdition he thought impossible, since national corruptions were to be purged by national calamities; but he was resolved to lend his feeble assistance to stem the torrent that was pouring in. With this spirit he wrote that excellent piece which is entitled "The Idea of a Patriot King;" in which he describes a monarch uninfluenced by party, leaning to the suggestions neither of Whigs nor Tories, but equally the friend and the father of all.[1]

[1] Compare Vol. V. p. 138. *The Bee*, No. 8.

Some time after, in the year 1749, after the conclusion of the peace, two years before, the measures taken by the administration seemed not to have been repugnant to his notions of political prudence for that juncture; in that year he wrote his last production, containing Reflections on the then state of the nation, principally with regard to her taxes and debts, and on the causes and consequences of them. This undertaking was left unfinished; for death snatched the pen from the hand of the writer.

Having passed the latter part of his life in dignity and splendor, his rational faculties improved by reflection, and his ambition kept under by disappointment, his whole aim seemed to have been to leave the stage of life, on which he had acted such various parts, with applause. He had long wished to fetch his last breath at Battersea, the place where he was born; and Fortune, that had through life seemed to traverse all his aims, at last indulged him in this. He had long been troubled with a cancer in his cheek, by which excruciating disease he died, on the verge of fourscore years of age. He was consonant with himself to the last; and those principles which he had all along avowed, he confirmed with his dying breath, having given orders that none of the clergy should be permitted to trouble him in his latest moments. His body was interred in Battersea church with those of his ancestors, and a marble monument erected to his memory, with the following excellent inscription:

Here lies
HENRY ST. JOHN,
In the reign of Queen Anne
Secretary of War, Secretary of State,
And Viscount Bolingbroke:
In the days of King George I. and King George II.
Something more and better.
His attachment to Queen Anne
Exposed him to a long and severe persecution;
He bore it with firmness of mind;
He passed the latter part of his time at home,
The enemy of no national party,
The friend of no faction;
Distinguished (under the cloud of a proscription,
Which had not been entirely taken off)
By zeal to maintain the liberty,
And to restore the ancient prosperity,
Of Great Britain.
He died the 12th of December,
1751, aged 73.

In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke, ever active, never depressed, ever pursuing Fortune, and as constantly disappointed by her. In whatever light we view his character, we shall find him an object rather properer for our wonder than our imitation, more to be feared than esteemed, and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the summit of power, and nothing seemed capable of satisfying his immoderate desires but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæsar, he wanted only his courage to be as successful: but the schemes his head dictated his heart often refused to execute; and he lost the ability to perform, just when the great occasion called for all his efforts to engage.

The same ambition that prompted him to be a politician actuated him as a philosopher. His aims were equally great and extensive in both capacities: unwilling to submit to any in the one, or any authority in the other, he entered the fields of science with a thorough contempt of all that had been established before him, and seemed willing to think everything wrong, that he might show his faculty in the reformation. It might have been better for his quiet as a man, if he had been content to act a subordinate character in the State; and it had certainly been better for his memory as a writer, if he had aimed at doing less than he attempted. Wisdom in morals, like every other art or science, is an accumulation that numbers have contributed to increase; and it is not for one single man to pretend that he can add more to the heap than the thousands that have gone before him. Such innovations more frequently retard than promote knowledge; their maxims are more agreeable to the reader, by having the gloss of novelty to recommend them, than those which are trite, only because they are true. Such men are, therefore, followed at first with avidity, nor is it till some time that their disciples begin to find their error. They often, though too late, perceive that they have been following a speculative inquiry, while they have been leaving a practical good; and while they have been practising the arts of doubting, they have been losing all firmness of principle, which might tend to establish the rectitude of their private conduct. As a moralist, therefore, Lord Bolingbroke, by having endeavored at too much, seems to have done nothing; but, as a political writer, few can equal, and none can exceed him. As he was a practical politician, his writings are less filled with those speculative illusions which are the result of solitude and seclusion. He wrote them with a certainty of their being opposed,

sifted, examined, and reviled; he therefore took care to build them up of such materials as could not be easily overthrown: they prevailed at the times in which they were written, they still continue to the admiration of the present age, and will probably last forever.

The following is a Copy of the Last Will and Testament of the late Right Hon. Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke:

"In the name of God, whom I humbly adore, to whom I offer up perpetual thanksgiving, and to the order of whose providence I am cheerfully resigned; this is the last Will and Testament of me, Henry St. John, in the reign of Queen Anne, and by her grace and favor, Viscount Bolingbroke. After more than thirty years' proscription, and after the immense losses I have sustained by unexpected events in the course of it; by the injustice and treachery of persons nearest to me; by the negligence of friends, and by the infidelity of servants: as my fortune is so reduced at this time, that it is impossible for me to make such disposition, and to give such ample legacies as I always intended, I am content therefore to give as follows:

"My debts, and the expenses of my burial in a decent and private manner at Battersea, in the vault where my last wife lies, being first paid, I give to William Chetwynd of Stafford, Esq., and Joseph Taylor of the Inner Temple, London, Esq., my two assured friends, each of them one hundred guineas, to be laid out by them as to each of them shall seem best, in some memorial, as the legacy of their departed friend; and I constitute them executors of this my will. The diamond ring which I wear upon my finger, I give to my old and long-approved friend the Marquis of Matignon, and, after his decease, to his son the Count de Gace, that I may be kept in the remembrance of a family whom I love and honor above all others.

"*Item*, I give to my said executors the sum of four hundred pounds in trust, to place out the same in some of the public funds or government securities, or any other securities, as they shall think proper, and to pay the interest or income thereof to Francis Arboneau, my valet-de-chambre, and Ann, his wife, and the survivor of them; and after the decease of the survivor of them, if their son John Arboneau shall be living, and under the age of eighteen years, to pay the said interest or income to him, until he shall attain his said age, and then to pay the principal money, or assign the securities for the same to him; but if he shall not be living at the decease of his father and mother, or shall afterwards die before his said age of eighteen years,

in either of the said cases the said principal sum of four hundred pounds, and the securities for the same, shall sink into my personal estate, and be accounted part thereof.

"*Item*, I give to my two servants, Marianne Tribon, and Remi Charnet, commonly called Picard, each one hundred pounds; and to every other servant living with me at the time of my decease, and who shall have lived with me two years or longer, I give one year's wages more than what shall be due to them at my death.

"And whereas, I am the author of the several books or tracts following, viz.: 'Remarks on the History of England, from the minutes of Humphrey Oldcastle. In twenty-four letters.' 'A Dissertation upon Parties. In nineteen letters to Caleb Danvers, Esq.' 'The Occasional Writer. Numb. 1, 2, 3.' 'The Vision of Camilick.' 'An Answer to the *London Journal* of December 21, 1728, by John Trot.' 'An Answer to the Defence of the Inquiry into the Reasons of the Conduct of Great Britain.' 'A Final Answer to the Remarks on the *Craftsman's* Vindication.'—All which books or tracts have been printed and published; and I am also the author of 'Four Letters on History,' etc., which have been privately printed and not published; but I have not assigned to any person or persons whatsoever the copy or the liberty of printing or reprinting any of the said books, or tracts, or letters: now I do hereby, as far as by law I can, give and assign to David Mallet, of Putney, in the county of Surrey, Esq., the copy and copies of all and each of the before-mentioned books or tracts, and letters, and the liberty of reprinting the same. I also give to the said David Mallet the copy and copies of all the manuscript books, papers, and writings, which I have written or composed, or shall write or compose, and leave at the time of my decease. And I further give to the said David Mallet all the books which, at the time of my decease, shall be in the room called my library.

"All the rest and residue of my personal estate, whatsoever and wheresoever, I give to my said executors; and hereby revoking all former wills, I declare this to be my last will and testament. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the twenty-second day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty-one. HENRY SAINT JOHN BOLINGBROKE.

"Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the said testator, as and for his last will and testament, in the presence of Oliver Price and Thomas Hall.

"Proved at London, the fifth day of March, one thousand seven

hundred and fifty-two, before the Worshipful Robert Chapman, doctor of laws and surrogate, by the oaths of William Chetwynd and Joseph Taylor, Esquires, the executors named in the will, to whom administration was granted, being first sworn duly to administer. William Legard, Peter St. Eloy, Henry Stevens, deputy registers."

In Dr. Maty's Life of Lord Chesterfield he mentions that he had seen Lord Bolingbroke for several months laboring under a cruel and to appearance incurable disorder. A cancerous humor in his face made a daily progress; and the empirical treatment he submitted to not only hastened his end, but also exposed him to the most excruciating pain. He saw him, for the last time, the day before his tortures began. Though the unhappy patient, as well as his friend, did then expect that he should recover, and accordingly desired him not to come again till his cure was completed, yet he still took leave of him in a manner which showed how much he was affected. He embraced the Earl with tenderness, and said, "God, who placed me here, will do what he pleases with me hereafter, and he knows best what to do. May he bless you." And in a letter from Chesterfield to a lady of rank at Paris he says: "I frequently see our friend Bolingbroke, but I see him with great concern. A humor he has long had in his cheek proves to be cancerous, and has made an alarming progress of late. Hitherto it is not attended with pain, which is all he wishes for; as to the rest he is resigned. Truly, a mind like his, so far superior to the generality, would have well deserved that Nature should have made an effort in his favor as to the body, and given him an uncommon share of health and duration."

The last scene is thus lamented, in a letter to the same lady: "Are you not greatly shocked, but I am sure you are, at the dreadful death of our friend Bolingbroke? The remedy has hastened his death, against which there was no remedy, for his cancer was not topical but universal, and had so infected the whole mass of his blood as to be incurable. What I most lament is, that the medicines put him to exquisite pain; an evil I dread much more than death, both for my friends and myself. I lose a warm, an amiable, and instructive friend. I saw him a fortnight before his death, when he depended upon a cure, and so did I; and he desired I would not come any more till he was quite well, which he expected would be in ten or twelve days. The next day the great pains came on, and never left him till within two days of his death, during which he lay insensible. What a man!

what extensive knowledge! what a memory! what eloquence! His passions, which were strong, were injurious to the delicacy of his sentiments; they were apt to be confounded together, and often wilfully. The world will do him more justice now than in his lifetime."[1]

[1] I will take this opportunity of pointing out what none of Johnson's biographers or editors mention, that Johnson's famous saying about Mallet's edition of Bolingbroke's "Posthumous Works" may be found in the notes to a poem published in April, 1755, called "The Birth-Day of Folly," where it is given (p. 14) as said by "a gentleman." As this is one of the best known of Johnson's sayings, so it is the earliest as yet discovered in print.

CONTRIBUTIONS

TO

"THE CRITICAL REVIEW"

IN

1757 AND 1759.

The periodical contributions of Goldsmith to *The Monthly Review* and *The Critical Review* were first added to Goldsmith's works in the edition of 1837, where they are mixed together as "Miscellaneous Criticisms, and "Poetical Criticisms." I have thought fit to separate them, keeping the contributions to each *Review* apart, and in strict chronological order. My reasons for so doing are, that *The Monthly Review* was edited by a bookseller and his wife, while *The Critical Review* was edited by an eminent author—by Smollett. Griffiths and his wife were in the habit of altering the contributions of their humble dependant; and though Smollett probably exercised the same power, it is clear that the alterations of the bookseller and his wife would not be comparable to the alterations made by an editor of Smollett's skill.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO "THE CRITICAL REVIEW."

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"THE CRITICAL REVIEW."

I.—MASSEY'S TRANSLATION OF OVID'S "FASTI."

"*Ovid's Fasti; or, the Roman Sacred Calendar, Translated into English Verse, with Explanatory Notes.* By WILLIAM MASSEY, Master of a Boarding-school at Wandsworth." 8vo.

IT was no bad remark of a celebrated French lady,[1] that a bad translator was like an ignorant footman, whose blundering messages disgraced his master by the awkwardness of the delivery, and frequently turned compliment into abuse, and politeness into rusticity. We cannot, indeed, see an ancient elegant writer mangled and misrepresented by the *doers into English* without some degree of indignation, and are heartily sorry that our poor friend Ovid should send his Sacred Calendar to us by the hands of Mr. William Massey, who, like the valet, seems to have entirely forgot his master's message, and substituted another in its room very unlike it. Mr. Massey observes, in his preface, with great truth, that it is strange that this most elaborate and learned of all Ovid's works should be so much neglected by our English translators; and that it should be so little read or regarded, whilst his "Tristia," "Epistles," and "Metamorphoses" are in almost every school-boy's hands. "All the critics, in general," says he, "speak of this part of Ovid's writings with a particular applause; yet I know not by what unhappy fate there has not been that use made thereof, which would be more beneficial, in many respects, to young students of the Latin tongue, than any other of this poet's works. For though Pantheons, and other books that treat of the Roman mythology, may be usefully put into the hands of young proficients in the Latin tongue, yet the richest fund of that sort of learning is here to be

[1] Madame de Lafayette.—GOLDSMITH.

found in the 'Fasti.' I am not without hopes, therefore, that by thus making this book more familiar and easy, in this dress, to English readers, it will the more readily gain admittance into our public schools; and that those who become better acquainted therewith will find it an agreeable and instructive companion, well stored with recondite learning. I persuade myself also that the notes which I have added to my version will be of advantage, not only to the mere English reader, but likewise to such as endeavor to improve themselves in the knowledge of the Roman language.

"As the Latin proverb says, *Jacta est alea;* and my performance must take its chance, as those of other poetic adventurers have done before me. I am very sensible that I have fallen in many places far below my original; and no wonder, as I had to copy after so fertile and polite a genius as Ovid's; who, as my Lord Orrery, somewhere in Dean Swift's 'Life,' humorously observes, 'could make an instructive song out of an old almanac.'

"That my translation is more diffuse, and not brought within the same number of verses contained in my original, is owing to two reasons: firstly, because of the concise and expressive nature of the Latin tongue, which it is very difficult (at least I find it so) to keep to strictly, in our language; and, secondly, I took the liberty sometimes to expatiate a little upon my subject, rather than leave it in obscurity, or unintelligible to my English readers, being indifferent whether they may call it translation or paraphrase; for, in short, I had this one design most particularly in view, that these Roman 'Fasti' might have a way opened for their entrance into our grammar-schools."

What use this translation may be of to grammar-schools we cannot pretend to guess, unless, by way of foil, to give the boys a higher opinion of the beauty of the original by the deformity of so bad a copy. But let our readers judge of Mr. Massey's performance by the following specimen. For the better determination of its merit, we shall subjoin the original of every quotation:

"The calends of each month throughout the year,
Are under Juno's kind peculiar care;
But on the ides, a white lamb from the field,
A grateful sacrifice, to Jove is kill'd;
But o'er the nones no guardian god presides;
And the next day to calends, nones, and ides,
Is inauspicious deem'd; for on those days
The Romans suffer'd losses many ways;

And from those dire events, in hapless war,
Those days unlucky nominated are."[1]

Ovid's address to Janus, than which in the original scarcely anything can be more poetical, is thus familiarized into something much worse than prose by the translator:

"Say, Janus, say, why we begin the year
In winter? sure the spring is better far:[2]
All things are then renew'd; a youthful dress
Adorns the flowers and beautifies the trees;
New swelling buds appear upon the vine,
And apple blossoms round the orchard shine;
Birds fill the air with the harmonious lay,
And lambkins in the meadows frisk and play;
The swallow then forsakes her wint'ry rest,
And in the chimney chatt'ring makes her nest;
The fields are then renew'd, the ploughman's care;
Mayn't this be call'd renewing of the year?
To my long questions Janus brief replied,
And his whole answer to two verses tied.

[1] "Vindicat Ausonias Junonis cura kalendas:
Idibus alba Jovi grandior agna cadit.
Nonarum tutela Deo caret. Omnibus istis
(Ne fallere cave) proximus Ater erit.
Omen ab eventu est: illis nam Roma diebus
Damna sub adverso tristia Marte tulit."

[2] "Dic, age, frigoribus quare novus incipit annus,
Qui melius per ver incipiendus erat?
Omnia tunc florent: tunc est nova temporis ætas
Et nova de gravido palmite gemma tumet
Et modo formatis amicitur vitibus arbos
Prodit et in summum seminis herba solum:
Et tepidum volucres concentibus aera mulcent,
Ludit et in pratis, luxuriatque pecus.
Tum blandi soles: ignotaque prodit hirundo;
Et luteum celsa sub trabe fingit opus.
Tum patitur cultus ager, et renovatur aratro.
Hæc anni novitas jure vocanda fuit.
Quæsieram multis: non multis ille moratus,
Contulit in versus sic sua verba duos.
Bruma novi prima est, veterisque novissima solis
Principium capiunt Phœbus et annus idem.
Post ea mirabar, cur non sine litibus esset
Prima dies. Causam percipe, Janus ait.

The winter tropic ends the solar race,
Which is begun again from the same place;
And to explain more fully what you crave,
The sun and year the same beginning have.
But why on new-year's-day, said I again,
Are suits commenc'd in courts? The reason's plain,
Replied the god; that business may be done,
And active labor emulate the sun,
With business is the year auspiciously begun;
But every artist, soon as he has tried
To work a little, lays his work aside.
Then I; but further, father Janus, say,
When to the gods we our devotions pay,
Why wine and incense first to thee are given?
Because, said he, I keep the gates of heaven;
That when you the immortal powers address,
By me to them you may have free access.
But why on new-year's-day are presents made,
And more than common salutations paid?
Then, leaning on his staff, the god replies,
In all beginnings there an omen lies;
From the first word we guess the whole design,
And augurs, from the first-seen bird, divine;
The gods attend to every mortal's prayer,
Their ears and temples always open are."

Is there a possibility that anything can be more different from Ovid in Latin than this Ovid in English? *Quam sibi dispar!* The translation is, indeed, beneath all criticism. But let us see what Mr. Massey can do with the sublime and more animated parts of the performance,

Tempora commisi nascentia rebus agendis;
Totus ab auspicio ne foret annus iners.
Quisque suas artes ob idem delibat agendo:
Nec plus quam solitum testificatur opus.
Mox ego; cur, quamvis aliorum numina placem,
Jane, tibi primo thura merumque fero?
Ut per me possis aditum, qui limina servo,
Ad quoscunque velim prorsus habere deos.
At cur læta tuis dicuntur verba kalendis;
Et damus alternas accipimusque preces?
Tum deus incumbens baculo, quem dextra gerebat,
Omina principiis, inquit, inesse solent.
Ad primam vocem timidas advertitis aures;
Et visam primum consulit augur avem.
Templa patent auresque deum: nec lingua caduca
Concipit ulla preces; dictaque pondus habent."

where the subject might have given him room to show his skill, and the example of his author stirred up the fire of poetry in his breast, if he had any in it. Towards the end of the second book of the "Fasti" Ovid has introduced the most tender and interesting story of Lucretia. The original is inimitable. Let us see what Mr. Massey has made of it in his translation. After he has described Tarquin returning from the sight of the beautiful Lucretia, he proceeds thus:

"The near approach of day the cock declar'd,
By his shrill voice, when they again repair'd[1]
Back to the camp; but Sextus there could find
Nor peace nor ease for his distemper'd mind;
A spreading fire does in his bosom burn,
Fain would he to the absent fair return;
The image of Lucretia fills his breast,
Thus at her wheel she sat! and thus was drest!
What sparkling eyes, what pleasure in her look!
How just her speech, and how divinely spoke!
Like as the waves, rais'd by a boisterous wind,
Sink by degrees, but leave a swell behind:
So though by absence lessen'd was his fire,
There still remain'd the kindlings of desire;
Unruly lust from hence began to rise,
Which how to gratify he must devise;
All on a rack, and stung with mad designs,
He reason to his passion quite resigns;
Whate'er's th' event, said he, I'll try my fate,
Suspense in all things is a wretched state;

[1] "Jam dederat cantum lucis prænuncius ales:
Cum referunt juvenes in sua castra pedem.
Carpitur attonitos absentis imagine sensus
Ille: recordanti plura magisque placent.
Sic sedit: sic culta fuit: sic stamina nevit;
Neglectæ collo sic jacuere comæ:
Hos habuit vultus: hic illi verba fuere:
Hic decor, hæc facies, hic color oris erat.
Ut solet a magno fluctus languescere flatu;
Sed tamen a vento, qui fuit ante, tumet:
Sic, quamvis aberat placitæ præsentia formæ,
Quem dederat præsens forma, manebat amor.
Ardet; et injusti stimulis agitatus amoris
Comparat indigno vimque dolumque toro.
Exitus in dubio est: audebimus ultima, dixit:
Viderit, audentis forsne deusne juvet.

Let some assistant god, or chance, attend,
All bold attempts they usually befriend:
This way, said he, I to the Gabii trod;
Then girding on his sword, away he rode.
The day was spent, the sun was nearly set,
When he arriv'd before Collatia's gate;
Like as a friend, but with a sly intent,
To Collatinus' house he boldly went;
There he a kind reception met within
From fair Lucretia, for they were akin.
What ignorance attends the human mind!
How oft we are to our misfortunes blind!
Thoughtless of harm, she made a handsome feast,
And o'er a cheerful glass regal'd her guest
With lively chat; and then to bed they went;
But Tarquin still pursued his vile intent;
All dark, about the dead of night he rose,
And softly to Lucretia's chamber goes;
His naked sword he carried in his hand,
That what he could not win, he might command;
With rapture on her bed himself he threw,
And as approaching to her lips he drew,
Dear cousin, ah, my dearest life, he said,
'Tis I, 'tis Tarquin, why are you afraid?
Trembling with fear, she not a word could say,
Her spirits fled, she fainted quite away;
Like as a lamb beneath a wolf's rude paws,
Appall'd and stunn'd, her breath she hardly draws.

Cepimus audendo Gabios quoque. Talia fatus
 Ense latus cingit: tergaque pressit equi.
Accipit ærata juvenem Collatia porta:
 Condere jam vultus sole parante suos.
Hostis, ut hospes, init penetralia Collatina:
 Comiter excipitur: sanguine junctus erat.
Quantum animis erroris inest! parat inscia rerum
 Infelix epulas hostibus illa suis.
Functus erat dapibus: poscunt sua tempora somni.
 Nox erat; et tota lumina nulla domo.
Surgit, et auratum vagina deripit ensem:
 Et venit in thalamos, nupta pudica, tuos.
Utque torum pressit; ferrum, Lucretia, mecum est,
 Natus, ait, regis, Tarquiniusque vocor.
Illa nihil: neque enim vocem viresque loquendi,
 Aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet.
Sed tremit, ut quondam stabulis deprensa relictis,
 Parva sub infesto cum jacet agne lupo.

What can she do? resistance would be vain,
She a weak woman, he a vig'rous man.
Should she cry out? his naked sword was by;
One scream, said he, and you this instant die:
Would she escape? his hands lay on her breast,
Now first by hands of any stranger prest:
The lover urg'd by threats, rewards, and prayers;
But neither prayers, rewards, nor threats, she hears:
Will you not yield? he cries; then know my will—
When these my warm desires have had their fill,
By your dead corpse I'll kill and lay a slave,
And in that posture both together leave;
Then feign myself a witness of your shame,
And fix a lasting blemish on your fame.
Her mind the fears of blemish'd fame control,
And shake the resolutions of her soul;
But of thy conquest, Tarquin, never boast,
Gaining that fort, thou hast a kingdom lost;
Vengeance thy complicated guilt attends,
Which both in thine and fam'ly's ruin ends.
With rising day the sad Lucretia rose,
Her inward grief her outward habit shows;

Quid faciat? pugnet? vincetur femina pugna.
Clamet? at in dextra, qui necet, ensis adest.
Effugiat? positis urgetur pectora palmis;
Nunc primum externa pectora tacta manu.
Instat amans hostis precibus, pretioque, minisque,
Nec prece, nec pretio, nec movet ille minis.
Nil agis; eripiam, dixit, per crimina vitam:
Falsus adulterii testis adulter ero.
Interimam famulum; cum quo deprensa fereris.
Succubuit famæ victa puella metu.
Quid, victor, gaudes? hæc te victoria perdet.
Heu quanto regnis nox stetit una tuis!
Jamque erat orta dies: passis sedet illa capillis;
Ut solet ad nati mater itura rogum.
Grandævumque patrem fido cum conjuge castris
Evocat; et posita venit uterque mora.
Utque vident habitum; quæ luctus causa, requirunt:
Cui paret exsequias, quove sit icta malo.
Illa diu reticet, pudibundaque celat amictu
Ora. Fluunt lacrymæ more perennis aquæ.
Hinc pater, hinc conjux lacrymas solantur, et orant
Indicet: et cæco flentque paventque metu.
Ter conata loqui," etc.


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Mournful she sat in tears, and all alone,
As if she'd lost her only darling son;
Then for her husband and her father sent,
Who Ardea left in haste to know th' intent;
Who, when they saw her all in mourning drest,
To know the occasion of her grief request;
Whose funeral she mourn'd desir'd to know,
Or why she had put on those robes of woe?
She long conceal'd the melancholy cause,
While from her eyes a briny fountain flows:
Her aged sire, and tender husband, strive
To heal her grief, and words of comfort give;
Yet dread some fatal consequence to hear,
And begg'd she would the cruel cause declare."

Our readers will easily perceive by this short specimen how very unequal Mr. Massey is to a translation of Ovid. In many places he has deviated entirely from the sense, and in every part fallen infinitely below the strength, elegance, and spirit of the original. We must beg leave, therefore, to remind him of the old Italian proverb, "Il Tradattores Tradatore," and hope he will never for the future traduce and injure any of those poor ancients who never injured him, by thus pestering the world with such translations as even his own school-boys ought to be whipped for.[1]

II.—MARRIOTT'S "FEMALE CONDUCT."

"*Female Conduct; being an Essay on the Art of Pleasing. To be practised by the Fair Sex, before and after Marriage. A Poem in two books. Inscribed to Plautilla.* By THOMAS MARRIOTT, Esq." 8vo.

THIS performance is dedicated to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales,[2] as the distinguished patroness of female virtue. In the preface the author gives some account of the poem, and endeavors to anticipate the malevolence of the critics. He expresses apprehension on one subject, which, however, we will venture to say is groundless; that is, "some people will say he is too much a poet." He might

[1] "It was the merit which he [Goldsmith] discovered in criticising a despicable translation of Ovid's 'Fasti' by a pedantic school-master; and his 'Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Literature,' which first introduced him to the acquaintance of Dr. Smollett."—*The Westminster Magazine* for 1774, p. 167.

[2] Widow of Frederick Prince of Wales, and mother of George III.



also have spared his apology for having used "every art of persuasion and argument, either by repetition, amplification, tale, fable, example, or allegory, and every pleasing manner of conveying precepts and enforcing doctrines." Mr. Marriott needs no excuse for that which cannot be displeasing. This poem, we are informed, is intended for the use and amusement of the female sex only; and the author hopes the salutary precepts and precautions it contains may prove an antidote to the poison of Ovid, and all modern productions of the like pernicious nature. We hope so too, and commend the author for the morality of his undertaking.

Prefixed to the poem we find an ode on the death of the Duke of Marlborough,[1] together with an imitation of the eighth ode of the fourth book of Horace, intended to be sent to his Grace at the beginning of the new year. In this piece the most remarkable circumstance is this: Mr. Marriott, thinking Horace begins and ends too abruptly, has ventured to introduce the original with two Latin lines of his own composition, and added six at the end, to render Horace more complete. He might, however, have saved himself the trouble of lacing his own lines in the margin: the reader would have distinguished them without this precaution. Perhaps the public may be curious to see this improvement on a Roman classic. He begins, then, in this manner:

"Annus quando novus nascitur, illius
Natalisque dies orbe revolvitur;

He concludes thus:

"Orco, Musa, pios eripiens nigro,
Arces, carminibus, tollit ad igneas;
Nomen grande tuum fiet amabilis,
Vatum materies, Musa tuis dabit
Mercedem meritis, Te faciet sacrum,
Sublimem, astra supra, Te vehet, ardua."

The poem itself is divided into two books, and contains many curious particulars. His account of Portia's death is very sublime:

"Fam'd Portia, worthy of her mate and sire,
Express'd such friendship, when she swallowed fire;
Soon as she heard of her dear Brutus' death,
Her consort breathless, she disdain'd to breath;
Each instrument of death, to her deny'd,
'Shall Portia be debarr'd from death?' she cry'd,
Then drank live embers, and intrepid died."

[1] Charles, third Duke of Marlborough, died 1758. See Vol. V. p. 106.

We wish Mr. Marriott would explain the manner in which the ancients *drank live embers.*

In p. 59, he candidly owns that he has labored hard in bringing these poems to perfection:

> "Hear me, fair pupil, ne'er despise the bard
> Whose muse for your instruction *labors hard.*"

In the next page we meet with this curious paradox:

> "Her witty child, let the fond mother boast,
> You show most wit, when you conceal it most."

This, for aught we know, may be the author's own case; for he seems to have a particular knack at concealing his wit.

There is something so agreeable, yet familiar, in his precepts!

> "Red heels, a wise man's head will ridicule."
>
> "From smart cock'd hat, let no vain streamers fly."
>
> "I only warn you—ne'er your teeth neglect;
> White teeth will make amends for each defect."
>
> "To singing add the force of music too."

This is a very necessary injunction; for it is very common to hear singing without music.

> "Make not your houses Babels, ah! no more
> Let numerous torches smear th' indecent door!"
>
> "A curtsey makes impression, if made well;
> Learn then to curtsey with an air genteel."

Rather than pick out any more flowers of this kind, with which the poem abounds, we will make a few extracts, from which the poet's genius may be more justly estimated:

> "Let no provoking words your wrath attend,
> Lest passion should in dire disaster end;
> How tragical had been Zantippe's fate,
> Had Socrates not been her peaceful mate!
> You may just hint a fault, while you commend
> His well-known merit, like a faithful friend.
> If distant hints from you he'll not receive,
> Desist; no curtain-lectures to him give;
> Think not to tame him, like some savage beast,
> By oft disturbing his nocturnal rest:
> Though much he may repeated lessons need,
> Sacred to concord is the genial bed:
> Thence far be sour, contentious, jarring noise!
> There dwell in silence, reconciling joys;

There love's bright lamp is fed with new desire;
Rekindled there, it never will expire.

"Once I through thin partition chanc'd to hear
A curtain-lecture, with astonish'd ear:
It wak'd, and scar'd me, in the dead of night,
Ere I my senses could recover quite;
It sounded like a seraph's plaintive voice,
So dire the sound, so solemn was the noise:
Trembling I heard, nor dar'd to ope my eyes,
Lest I might view a horrid spectre rise.
Soon I perceiv'd it was a woman's tongue,
Rehearsing to her mate each nuptial wrong;
Obdurate he, and stupid as a dunce,
Heard unconcern'd, nor interrupted once;
Till faint and spent, she falter'd in her speech,
And, quite exhausted, could no longer preach;
When her speech fail'd, she soon began to cry,
And ev'ry tear had its attendant sigh.
Then he, to aggravate each nuptial wrong,
Wish'd death would silence soon her clam'rous tongue.
Thus every curtain-lecture, preach'd in vain,
Gives to the preacher, not the hearer, pain.
To hint a fault requires the nicest touch,
The pride of self-sufficient man is such;
Few with good grace can give or take advice,
So few think others than themselves more wise;
Their faults the wisest are averse to hear;
Touch gently, lest you hurt a tender ear."

* * * * *

He concludes the book with the following imitation of Virgil at the close of his "Georgics:"

"Retir'd in rural shades I sung these lays,
That teach a maid and wife the art to please;
While Marlbro' executes what George commands,
And British thunder pours on Gallic lands;
While glowing with hereditary fires,
To his great sire's achievements he aspires."

* * * * *

To draw a comparison between Ovid and our bard, we may observe that as one performance of the former was styled *Tristia* from the subject, so this production may derive the same title from the execution, and be justly denominated *Marriott's Tristia*.[1]

[1] Marriott replied to this. See Article XIV.

III.—BARRETT'S OVID'S "EPISTLES."

"*Ovid's Epistles translated into English Verse; with Critical Essays and Notes. Being part of a Poetical and Oratorical Lecture, read in the Grammar-School of Ashford, in the County of Kent; and calculated to initiate Youth in the first Rudiments of Taste.* By STEPHEN BARRETT, A.M., Master of the said School." 8vo.

THE praise which is every day lavished upon Virgil, Horace, or Ovid is often no more than an indirect method the critic takes to compliment his own discernment. Their works have long been considered as models of beauty; to praise them now is only to show the conformity of our taste to theirs; it tends not to advance their reputation, but to promote our own. Let us, then, dismiss for the present the pedantry of panegyric; Ovid needs it not, and we are not disposed to turn encomiasts on ourselves.

It will be sufficient to observe, that the multitude of translators which have attempted this poet serves to evince the number of his admirers; and their indifferent success, the difficulty of equalling his elegance or his ease.

Dryden, ever poor, and ever willing to be obliged, solicited the assistance of his friends for a translation of these epistles. It was not the first time his miseries obliged him to call in happier bards to his aid, and to permit such to quarter their fleeting performances on the lasting merit of his name. This eleemosynary translation, as might well be expected, was extremely unequal, frequently unjust to the poet's meaning, almost always so to his fame. It was published without notes; for it was not at that time[1] customary to swell every performance of this nature with comment and scholia. The reader did not then choose to have the current of his passions interrupted, his attention every moment called off from pleasure only, to be informed why he was so pleased. It was not then thought necessary to lessen surprise by anticipation, and, like some spectators we have met at the play-house, to take off our attention from the performance by telling in our ear what will follow next.

Since this united effort, Ovid, as if born to misfortune, has under-

[1] 1680.

gone successive metamorphoses, being sometimes transposed by school-masters unacquainted with English, and sometimes transversed by ladies who knew no Latin; thus he has alternately worn the dress of a pedant or a rake, either crawling in humble prose, or having his hints explained into unbashful meaning. School-masters, who knew all that was in him, except his graces, give the names of places and towns at full length, and he moves along stiffly in their literal versions, as the man who, as we are told in the "Philosophical Transactions," was afflicted with an universal anchylosis. His female imitators, on the other hand, regard the dear creature only as a lover; express the delicacy of his passion by the ardor of their own; and if now and then he is found to grow a little too warm, and perhaps to express himself a little indelicately, it must be imputed to the more poignant sensations of his fair admirers. In a word, we have seen him stripped of all his beauties in the versions of Stirling and Clark, and talk like a debauchee in that of Mrs. ——;[1] but the ladies should ever be sacred from criticism; perhaps the ladies have a right to describe raptures which none but themselves can bestow.

A poet like Ovid, whose great beauty lies rather in expression than sentiment, must be necessarily difficult to translate. A fine sentiment may be conveyed several different ways without impairing its vigor; but a sentence delicately expressed will scarcely admit the least variation without losing beauty. The performance before us will serve to convince the public that Ovid is more easily admired than imitated. The translator, in his notes, shows an ardent zeal for the reputation of his poet. It is possible, too, he may have felt his beauties; however, he does not seem possessed of the happy art of giving his feelings expression. If a kindred spirit, as we have often been told, must animate the translator, we fear the claims of Mr. Barrett will never receive a sanction in the heraldry of Parnassus.

His intentions, even envy must own, are laudable; nothing less than to instruct boys, school-masters, grown gentlemen, the public, *in the principles of taste* (to use his own expression), both by precept and example. His manner, it seems, is "to read a course of poetical lectures to his pupils one night in the week; which, beginning with this author, running through select pieces of our own, as well as the Latin and Greek writers, and ending with Longinus, contributes *no little*

[1] Miss Elizabeth Caroline Keene, who, in 1758, published a translation of Dido's "Epistle to Æneas."

towards forming their taste." *No little!* reader, observe that, from a person so perfectly master of the force of his own language: what may not be expected from his comments on the beauties of another?

But, in order to show in what manner he has executed these intentions, it is proper he should first march in review as a poet. We shall select the first epistle that offers, which is that from Penelope to Ulysses, observing beforehand that the whole translation is a most convincing instance that English words may be placed in Latin order without being *wholly* unintelligible. Such forced transpositions serve at once to give an idea of the translator's learning and of difficulties surmounted.

PENELOPE TO ULYSSES.

"This, still your wife, my ling'ring lord! I send;
Yet be your answer personal, not penn'd."

These lines seem happily imitated from Taylor, the water poet, who has it thus:

"To thee, dear Ursula, these lines I send;
Not with my hand, but with my heart, they're penn'd."

But, not to make a pause in the reader's pleasure, we proceed:

"Sunk now is Troy, the curse of Grecian dames!
(Her king, her all, a worthless prize!) in flames.
O had by storms (his fleet to Sparta bound)
Th' adult'rer perish'd in the *mad profound!*"

Here seems some obscurity in the translation: we are at a loss to know what is meant by the *mad profound.* It can certainly mean neither Bedlam nor Fleet-ditch; for though the epithet *mad* might agree with one, or *profound* with the other, yet when united they seem incompatible with either. The *profound* has frequently been used to signify bad verses; and poets are sometimes said to be *mad:* who knows but Penelope wishes that Paris might have died in the very act of rhyming? and, as he was a shepherd, it is not improbable to suppose but that he was a poet also.

"Cold in a widow'd bed I ne'er had lay,
Nor chid with weary eyes the ling'ring day."

Lay for *lain,* by the figure ginglimus. Our translator makes frequent use of this figure.

"Nor, the protracted nuptials to avoid,
By night unravell'd what the day employ'd.

When have not fancied dangers broke my rest?
Love, tim'rous passion! rends the anxious breast.
In thought I saw you each fierce Trojan's aim,
Pale at the mention of bold Hector's name!"

Ovid makes Penelope shudder at the name of Hector. Our translator, with great propriety, transfers the fright from Penelope to Ulysses himself: it is he who grows pale at the name of Hector; and well indeed he might; for Hector is represented by Ovid, somewhere else, as a terrible fellow, and Ulysses as little better than a poltroon.

"Whose spear when brave Antilochus embrued,
By the dire news awoke, my fear renew'd.
Clad in dissembled arms Patroclus died:
And, 'Oh the fate of stratagem!' I cried.
Tlepolemus, beneath the Lycian dart,
His breath resign'd, and rous'd afresh my smart.
Thus, when each Grecian press'd the bloody field,
Cold, icy horrors my fond bosom chill'd."

Here we may observe how epithets tend to strengthen the force of expression. First, her horrors are cold, and so far Ovid seems to think also; but the translator adds, from himself, the epithet icy, to show that they are still colder—a fine climax of frigidity!

"But Heaven, indulgent to my chaste desire,
Has wrapp'd (my husband safe) proud Troy in fire."

The reader may have already observed one or two instances of our translator's skill, in parenthetically clapping one sentence within another. This contributes not a little to obscurity; and obscurity, we all know, is nearly allied to admiration. Thus, when the reader begins a sentence which he finds pregnant with another, which still teems with a third, and so on, he feels the same surprise which a countryman does at Bartholomew Fair. Hocus shows a bag, in appearance empty; slap, and out come a dozen new-laid eggs; slap again, and the number is doubled: but what is his amazement when it swells with the hen that lays them!

"The Grecian chiefs return, each altar shines,
And spoils of Asia grace our native shrines.
Gifts, for their lords restor'd, the matrons bring,
The Trojan fates o'ercome, triumphant sing;
Old men and trembling maids admire the songs,
And wives hang, list'ning, on their husbands' *tongues*."

Critics have expatiated in raptures on the delicate use the ancients have made of the verb *pendere*. Virgil's goats are described as hanging on the mountain-side; the eyes of a lady hang on the looks of her lover. Ovid has increased the force of the metaphor, and describes the wife as hanging on the lips of her husband. Our translator has gone still farther, and described the lady as pendent from his tongue. A fine picture!

"Now, drawn in wine, fierce battles meet their eyes,
And Ilion's towers in miniature arise:
There stretch'd Sigean plains, here Simoïs flow'd;
And there old Priam's lofty palace stood.
Here Peleus' son encamp'd, Ulysses there;
Here Hector's corpse distained the rapid car."

"Of this the Pylian sage in quest of thee
Embark'd, your son inform'd his mother he."

If it were permitted to offer a correction upon the two last lines, we would translate them into plain English thus, still preserving the rhyme entire:

The Pylian sage inform'd your son embark'd in quest of thee,
Of this, and he his mother, that is me.

"He told how Rhesus and how Dolon fell,
By your wise conduct and Tydides' steel;
That doom'd by heavy sleep oppress'd to die,
And this prevented, a nocturnal spy!

"Rash man! unmindful what your friends you owe,
Night's gloom to tempt, and brave a Thracian foe.
By one assisted in the doubtful strife;
To me how kind! how provident of life!
Still throbb'd my breast, till, victor, from the plain,
You join'd, on Thracian steeds, th' allies again.

"But what to me avails high Ilium's fall,
Or soil continued o'er its ruin'd wall;
If still, as when it stood, my wants remain;
If still I wish you in these arms in vain?

"Troy, sack'd to others, yet to me remains,
Though Greeks, with captive oxen, till her plains;
Ripe harvests bend where once her turrets stood;
Rank is her soil, manur'd with Phrygian blood;
Harsh on the ploughs men's bones, half-buried, sound,
And grass each ruin'd mansion hides around.
Yet, hid in distant climes, my conq'ror stays;
Unknown the cause of these severe delays!

"No foreign merchant to our isle resorts,
But question'd much of you, he leaves our ports;
Hence each departing sail a letter bears
To speak (if you are found) my anxious cares.

"Our son to Pylos cut the briny wave;
But Nestor's self a dubious answer gave:
To Sparta next—nor even could Sparta tell
What seas you plough, or in what region dwell!

"Better had stood Apollo's sacred wall:
O could I now my former wish recall!
War my sole dread, the scene I then should know;
And thousands then would share the common woe:
But all things now, not knowing what to fear,
I dread; and give too large a field to care.
Whole lists of dangers, both by land and sea,
Are muster'd, to have caus'd so long delay.

"But while your conduct thus I fondly clear,
Perhaps (true man!) you court some foreign fair;
Perhaps you rally your domestic loves,
Whose art the snowy fleece alone improves.
No!—may I err, and start at false alarms;
May naught but force detain you from my arms.

"Urg'd by a father's right again to wed,
Firm I refuse, still faithful to your bed!
Still let him urge the fruitless, vain design;
I am—I must be—and I will be thine.
Though melted by my chaste desires, of late
His rig'rous importunities abate.

"Of teasing suitors a luxurious train,
From neighboring isles, have cross'd the liquid plain.
Here uncontroll'd th' audacious crews resort,
Rifle your wealth, and revel in your court.
Pisander, Polybus, and Medon lead;
Antinoüs and Eurymachus succeed,
With others, whose rapacious throats devour
The wealth you purchas'd once, distain'd with gore.
Melanthius add, and Irus, hated name!
A beggar rival to complete our shame.

"Three, helpless three! are here: a wife not strong,
A sire too aged, and a son too young;
He late, *by fraud*, embark'd for Pylos' shore,
Nigh from my arms forever had been tore."

These two lines are replete with beauty: *nigh*, which implies approximation, and *from*, which implies distance, are, to use our trans-

lator's expressions, drawn, as it were, up in a line of battle. *Tore* is put for *torn*, that is, torn by fraud from her arms; not that her son played truant and embarked by fraud, as a reader who does not understand Latin might be apt to fancy.

> "Heaven grant the youth survive each parent's date,
> And no cross chance reverse the course of fate.
> Your nurse and herdsman join this wish of mine,
> And the just keeper of your bristly swine."

Our translator observes in a note that "the simplicity expressed in these lines is so far from being a blemish that it is, in fact, a very great beauty; and the modern critic, who is offended with the mention of a *sty*, however he may pride himself upon his false delicacy, is either too short-sighted to penetrate into real nature, or has a stomach too nice to digest the noblest relics of antiquity." He means, no doubt, to digest a hog-sty; but, antiquity apart, we doubt if even Powell, the fire-eater, himself could bring his appetite to relish so unsavory a repast.

> "By age your sire disarm'd, and wasting woes,
> The helm resigns, amidst surrounding foes.
> This may your son resume (when years allow),
> But oh! a father's aid is wanted now.
> Nor have I strength his title to maintain;
> Haste, then, our only refuge, o'er the main.
>
> "A son, and long may Heaven the blessing grant,
> You have, whose years a sire's instructions want.
> Think how Laërtes drags an age of woes,
> In hope that you his dying eyes may close;
> And I, left youthful, in my early bloom,
> Shall aged seem, how soon soe'er you come."

But let not the reader imagine we can find pleasure in thus exposing absurdities which are too ludicrous for serious reproof. While we censure as critics we feel as men, and could sincerely wish that those whose greatest sin is, perhaps, the venial one of writing bad verses, would regard their failure in this respect as we do, not as faults, but foibles; they may be good and useful members of society, without being poets. The regions of taste can be travelled only by a few, and even those often find indifferent accommodation by the way. Let such as have not got a passport from Nature be content with happiness, and leave the poet the unrivalled possession of his misery, his garret, and his fame.

We have of late seen the republic of letters crowded with some who have no other pretensions to applause but industry, who have no other merit but that of reading many books, and making long quotations: these we have heard extolled by sympathetic dunces, and have seen them carry off the rewards of genius; while others, who should have been born in better days, felt all the wants of poverty and the agonies of contempt. Who, then, that has a regard for the public, for the literary honor of our country, for the figure we shall one day make amongst posterity, that would not choose to see such humbled as are possessed only of talents that might have made good cobblers, had fortune turned them to trade? Should such prevail, the real interests of learning must be in a reciprocal proportion to the power they possess. Let it be, then, the character of our periodical endeavors, and hitherto we flatter ourselves it has ever been, not to permit an ostentation of learning to pass for merit, nor to give a pedant quarter upon the score of his industry alone, even though he took refuge behind Arabic, or powdered his hair with hieroglyphics. Authors thus censured may accuse our judgment, or our reading, if they please, but our own hearts will acquit us of envy or ill-nature, since we reprove only with a desire to reform.

But we had almost forgot that our translator is to be considered as a critic as well as a poet; and in this department he seems also equally unsuccessful with the former. Criticism at present is different from what it was upon the revival of taste in Europe: all its rules are now well known; the only art at present is, to exhibit them in such lights as contribute to keep the attention alive, and excite a favorable audience. It must borrow graces from eloquence, and please while it aims at instruction; but instead of this, we have a combination of trite observations, delivered in a style in which those who are disposed to make war upon words will find endless opportunities of triumph.

He is sometimes hypercritical. Thus, page 9: "Pope, in his excellent 'Essay on Criticism' (as will, in its place, when you come to be lectured upon it, at full be explained), terms this making the sound an echo to the sense. But I apprehend that definition takes in but a part, for the best ancient poets excelled in thus painting to the eye as well as to the ear. Virgil, describing his housewife preparing her wine, exhibits the act of the fire to the eye:

> 'Aut dulcis musti Vulcano decoquit humorem,
> Et foliis undam trepidi dispumat aheni.'

For the line (if I may be allowed the expression) boils over; and, in order to reduce it to its proper bounds, you must, with her, skim off the redundant syllable." These are beauties which, doubtless, the reader is displeased he cannot discern.

Sometimes confused: "There is a *deal* of artful and concealed satire in what Oenone throws out against Helen; and, to speak truth, there was fair scope for it, and it might naturally be expected. Her chief design was to render his new mistress suspected of meretricious arts, and make him apprehensive that she would hereafter be as ready to leave him for some new gallant, as she had before, perfidiously to her lawful husband, followed him."

Sometimes contradictory; thus, page 3: "Style (says he) is used by some writers as synonymous with diction, yet, in my opinion, it has rather a complex sense, including both sentiment and diction." Oppose to this, page 135: "As to concord, and even style, they are acquirable by most youth in due time, and by many with ease; but the art of thinking properly, and choosing the best sentiments on every subject, is what comes later."

And sometimes he is guilty of false criticism: as when he says, Ovid's chief excellence lies in description. Description was the rock on which he always split; "Nescivit quod bene cessit relinquere," as Seneca says of him: when once he embarks in description, he most commonly tires us before he has done with it. But, to tire no longer the reader, or the translator, with extended censure; as a critic, this gentleman seems to have drawn his knowledge from the remarks of others, and not his own reflection; as a translator, he understands the language of Ovid, but not his beauties; and though he may be an excellent school-master, he has, however, no pretensions to taste.

IV.—SPENSER'S "FAËRIE QUEENE."

"*The Faërie Queene.* By EDMUND SPENSER. A New Edition, with Notes, Critical and Explanatory, by RALPH CHURCH, M.A., late Student of Christ Church, Oxon." In four volumes, 8vo.

IT is the remark of Boccalini, that a writer, whose works have passed through a number of editions after his decease, would hardly know his own performances again if he were to rise from the dead. Critics mistake his meaning, or are desirous of giving a new one

of their own. Dunces interpolate the text, and printers, too, add their faults to swell the account: so that the poet at last, like a river which receives a new tincture from every soil through which it flows, makes a very different appearance from that with which he set out.[1]

Perhaps no writer confirms the truth of this remark more than Spenser; for, in proportion as the number of editions of the "Faërie Queene" have increased, the text has become more precarious; so that it was absolutely necessary to compare subsequent ones with that published by himself, and thus restore his meaning where it had deviated from ancient correctness and simplicity. Mr. Church, in the edition in view, has completed this undertaking, and merits all the praise due to an exact and cautious editor. Here we see our old favorite rising once more from his faults, and borrowing all the helps of exact punctuation. We can now tread the regions of fancy without interruption, and expatiate on fairy wilds, such as our great magician has been pleased to represent them. There is a pleasing tranquillity of mind which ever attends the reading of this ancient poet. We leave the ways of the present world, and all the ages of primeval innocence and happiness rise to our view.[2] Virgil, and even Homer, seem to be modern upon the comparison. The imagination of his reader leaves reason behind, pursues the tale, without considering the allegory, and, upon the whole, is charmed without instruction.

It is, it must be owned, somewhat surprising that Spenser, who was so well acquainted with Virgil, should not have adopted the "Æneid" of the Roman poet, rather than the *Romans* of the *Wises* and *Jongleurs*, his more immediate predecessors. It is true he has endeavored to soften this defect by forming his work into an allegory; however, the pleasure we receive from this species of composition, though never so finely balanced between truth and fiction, is but of a subordinate nature, as we have always two passions opposing each other: a love

[1] No modern British classic has been a greater sufferer in this respect than Goldsmith himself.

[2] "After reading a canto of Spenser, two or three days ago, to an old lady between seventy and eighty years of age, she said that I had been showing her a gallery of pictures. I don't know how it is, but she said very right; there is something in Spenser that pleases one as strongly in one's old age as it did in one's youth. I read the 'Faërie Queene' when I was about twelve with infinite delight, and I think it gave me as much when I read it over about a year or two ago."—POPE, 1743–44. Spence, by Singer, p. 297.

of reality, which represses the flights of fancy, and a passion for the marvellous, which would leave reflection behind.

However, with all his faults, no poet enlarges the imagination more than Spenser. Cowley was formed into poetry by reading him; and many of our modern writers, such as Gray, Akenside, and others, seem to have studied his manner with the utmost attention: from him their compounded epithets, and solemn flow of numbers, seem evidently borrowed; and the verses of Spenser may, perhaps, one day be considered the standard of English poetry. It were happy, indeed, if his beauties were the only objects of modern imitation; but many of his words, justly fallen into disuse among his successors, have been of late revived, and a language, already too copious, has been augmented by an unnecessary re-enforcement. Learning and language are ever fluctuating, either rising to perfection or retiring into primeval barbarity: perhaps the point of English perfection is already passed, and every intended improvement may now be only deviation. This at least is certain, that posterity will perceive a strong similitude between the poets of the sixteenth and those of the latter end of the eighteenth century.

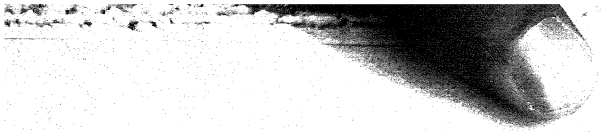
To this edition of Spenser's works the editor has prefixed some account of his life, gleaned from his own and contemporary writings. There is a strong similitude between the lives of almost all our English poets. The Ordinary of Newgate, we are told, has but one story, which serves for the life of every hero that happens to come within the circle of his pastoral care; however unworthy the resemblance appears, it may be asserted that the history of one poet might serve with as little variation for that of any other. Born of creditable parents, who gave him a pious education; however, in spite of all their endeavors, in spite of all the exhortations of the minister of the parish on Sundays, he turned his mind from following good things, and fell to—writing verses! Spenser, in short, lived poor, was reviled by the critics of his time, and died at last in the utmost distress. There are some quotations brought in proof of this, from a poem called "The Purple Island," which, as the reader may have never seen, we shall beg leave to transcribe. "The poet had been speaking of the discouragements attending learning and the Muses:

STANZA 17.

"'But wretched we to whom these iron daies
(Hard daies) afford nor matter nor reward!

Edmund Spenser





19.

"'Witnesse our Colin; whom though all the Graces
And all the Muses nurst; whose well taught song,
Parnassus self, and Glorian embraces,
And all the learn'd, and all the shepherds throng;
Yet all his hopes were crost, all suits denied,
Discourag'd, scorn'd, his writings vilifi'd;
Poorly (poore man) he liv'd; poorly (poore man) he di'd.

20.

"'And had not that great Hart (whose honour'd head
Ah! lies full low), piti'd thy wofull plight;
There hadst thou lien unwept, unburied,
Unblest, nor grac'd with any common rite:
Yet shalt thou live, when thy great foe shall sink
Beneath his mountain tombe, whose fame shall stink,
And time his blacker name shall blurre with blackest ink.

21.

"'O! let th' Iambick muse revenge that wrong,
Which cannot slumber in thy sheets of lead:
Let thy abused honor crie as long
As there be quills to write, or eyes to reade:
On his rank name let thine own votes be turn'd,
Oh may that man that hath the Muses scorn'd,
Alive, nor dead, be ever of a Muse adorn'd.'

"The reader will excuse our tempting his curiosity by adding that the author of these agreeable lines is Phineas Fletcher, nephew to Richard Fletcher, Bishop of London.[1] As we have taken the liberty to introduce on this occasion this poet so little known, we cannot but add that he seems to be of Spenser's own turn of mind. At Hilgay[2] 'tis most likely this ingenious and good man passed his days, privately and humbly, and with all the modest sentiments with which he everywhere abounds. We cannot but think of him and love him when he mentions

——'the blushing strawberries,
Which lurk close shrouded from high-looking eyes,
Showing that sweetness oft both low and hidden lies;'

"And we cannot but revere and envy him, when giving us advice:

[1] Goldsmith might have added that the Bishop was the father of the great dramatic poet, Beaumont's associate.

[2] In Norfolk. He is supposed to have died there, about the year 1650.

'Would'st thou live honor'd? clip Ambition's wing;
To Reason's yoke thy furious passions bring;
Thrice noble is the man who of himself is king!'"

The notes to this edition are mostly imitations or various readings, and sufficiently evince the editor's industry, though they contribute little to enlighten the reader. There is also a glossary of the obsolete terms which are not explained in the notes; and, in short, such helps as are sufficient to understand the poet, without any ostentation of learning in the learned editor.

V.—LANGHORNE'S "DEATH OF ADONIS, FROM THE GREEK OF BION."

"*The Death of Adonis: a Pastoral Elegy, from the Greek of Bion.* By the Rev. JOHN LANGHORNE."[1] 4to.

OF all the different kinds of poetry, elegy has been least cultivated since the revival of letters. We have seen the ancients rivalled, sometimes excelled, in the epic, the ode, or the pastoral; but in elegy they still remain without competitors, and the attempts of Biderman, Fontaine, Deshouliers, and Hammond serve only to evince their inferiority. This may seem the more surprising, as there is scarcely a beauty in poetry that elegy is not capable of admitting; sometimes replete with pathetic simplicity, sometimes even assuming the bold metaphors of resentment, and often borrowing every ornament that art can bestow; in a word, is tender, passionate, or graceful, by turns. Elegy may be distinguished into three different kinds, as either of them happens to prevail. It is Love, and not the poet, who speaks; like a true boy, he is easily enraged, and as easily appeased; now exulting with success, again melting into tears of disappointment; when angry, threatening impossibilities; when appeased, repenting his insolence with the most abject humility. But, whatever the pretences of the moderns, or even of the Latins, may be to this beautiful species of poetry, the little poem before us bears away the prize, and is incontestably the finest production of the elegiac Muse, if we except that of Euripides, in his "Andromache." We shall not enter into a dis-

[1] Author of the "Country Justice," "Owen of Carron," etc. Born 1735, died 1779.

quisition with the grammarians, whether it be an elegy or not, as it wants what they term the characteristic difference of this species of poesy; viz., an alternate succession of hexameters and pentameters; be it sufficient to observe, that it unites every charm that a beautiful passion can suggest, and though simple, yet it is *simplex munditiis.* Some modern critics, it is true, have asserted that plaintive elegy should be entirely unornamented: it might be sufficient to answer, that the practice of the ancients is against them; but nature itself also opposes this doctrine. A despairing lover, it is true, has no occasion to be tricked out like a beau, but yet should be sufficiently beautiful to interest the spectators with favorable sentiments, sufficiently ornamented to seem still desirous of pleasing. Elegy should in some measure resemble the poet's mistress:

"Purpureo jacuit semisupina toro
Tamque fuit neglecta decens."

"Stretched on this mountain thy torn lover lies;
Weep, queen of beauty! for he bleeds—he dies.
Ah! yet behold life's last drops faintly flow,
In streams of purple o'er those limbs of snow!
From the pale cheek the perish'd roses fly;
And death dims slow the ghastly-gazing eye.
Kiss, kiss those fading lips, ere chill'd in death;
With soothing fondness stay the fleeting breath.
'Tis vain—ah! give the soothing fondness o'er!
Adonis feels the warm salute no more."

There is no species of poetry that has not its particular character; and this diversity, which the ancients have so religiously observed, is founded in nature itself. The more just their imitations are found, the more perfectly are those characters distinguished. Thus the pastoral never quits his pipe in order to sound the trumpet; nor does elegy venture to strike the lyre. It is, indeed, passionate, but has nothing terrible; nor is there, in the wildest rage of a lover, aught that can excite a stronger emotion than pity:

"But streaming when he saw life's purple tide
Stretch'd her fair arms, with trembling voice she cry'd:
Yet stay, lov'd youth! a moment ere we part,
O let me kiss thee!—hold thee to my heart!
A little moment, dear Adonis! stay!
And kiss thy Venus, ere those lips are clay.
That last-left pledge shall soothe my tortur'd breast,
When thou art gone."———

Let it not be thought that emotion alone will suffice for making an elegy, and that love will make a greater poet than study and genius. Passion alone will never produce a finished piece; it may, indeed, furnish the most natural sentiments, if we attend its impulses; but it is art alone that must turn them to use, and join the graces of expression:

"Wretch that I am! immortal and divine,
In life imprison'd whom the fates confine,
He comes! receive him to thine iron arms;
Blest queen of death! receive the prince of charms.
Far happier then, to whose wide realms repair,
Whatever lovely, and whatever fair.
The smiles of joy, the golden hours, are fled;
Grief, only grief, survives Adonis dead."

As the philosopher asserted that he learned the truest philosophy in Homer, so he who would write a perfect elegy should study the performance before us with the closest application. From one example of this kind he will learn more than from all the precepts critics have delivered on the subject. He will here perceive beauty in distress, borrowing the language of nature and passion, and adapting sentiments to the subject; the thoughts rising, as of their own accord, without being sought after; the verse flowing with various harmony; the whole combined by a concealed connection, yet seemingly without order: in short, our idea increasing, by just degrees, to the end of the piece; like those landscapes that rise upon the eye, till they seem to touch the skies:

"Thus Venus griev'd—the Cupids round deplore,
And mourn her beauty and her love no more.
Now flowing tears in silent grief complain,
Mix with the purple streams, and flood the plain.
Yet not in vain those sacred drops shall flow,
The purple streams in blushing roses glow,
And catching life from ev'ry falling tear,
Their azure heads anemonies shall rear.
But cease in vain to cherish dire despair,
Nor count thy sorrows to the desert air.
The last sad office let thy hand supply,
Stretch the stiff limbs, and close the glaring eye."

It is not thus that many of our moderns have composed what they call elegies: they seem scarcely to know its real character. If a hero or a poet happens to die with us, the whole board of elegiac poets

raise the dismal chorus, adorn his hearse with all the paltry escutcheons of flattery, rise into bombast, paint him as at the head of his thundering legions, or reining Pegasus in his most rapid career: they are sure to strew cypress enough upon the bier, dress up all the Muses in mourning, and look themselves every whit as dismal and sorrowful as an undertaker's shop. Neither pomp nor flattery agrees with real affliction: it is not thus that Marcellus, even that Marcellus who was adopted by the emperor of the world, is bewailed by Propertius. His beauty, his strength, his milder virtues, seem to have caught the poet's affections, and inspired his affliction. Were a person to die in these days, though he was never at a battle in his life, our elegiac writers would be sure to make one for the occasion. Our lovers, too, if they are really in love, seem more solicitous to show their wit than their passion, adapt trifling ornaments to broad sentiments, and somewhat resemble the lawyer, who cared not whether he gained or lost his cause, provided he could make the court admire his eloquence:

> "Je hais ces vains auteurs, dont la muse forcée,
> M'entretient de ses feux, toujour froid, et glacée,
> Qui s'affligent par art, et foux de sens rassis
> S'érigent pour rimer en amoureux transit."—BOILEAU.

With respect to the present translation, from the instances already given, the reader need scarcely be informed that it is very elegant, and tolerably correct. Several of the minor poets are as yet without translations: we hope that an hint will not be lost.

VI.—GOGUET ON "THE ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF LAWS, ARTS, AND SCIENCES."

"*De l' Origine des Loix, des Arts, et des Sciences; et de leurs Progrès chez les Anciens Peuples.* Par M. le Président GOGUET."[1] 3 vols. in 4to. Paris.

THERE is a prettiness, a neatness, and symmetry of parts in the plan of most French books, which we admire, even while we hold the abilities of the author in contempt. Their specious manner we often mistake for solid erudition, and the superficial elegance of a gentleman frequently passes for the depth, labor, and judgment of the scholar. Such is the happy genius of this lively nation, that the most

[1] Antoine-Yves Goguet, born at Paris, 1716; died there, 1758.

profound speculations are treated by them with the freedom of a novel; and Descartes and Newton so refined and polished as to make no ungraceful appearance in the drawing-room. This has its good as well as bad effects; it gives lustre to the other accomplishments of the man of fashion, but it banishes true science into cells and cloisters. We should gladly see their writers studied by our beaux, but less closely copied by our authors. It is the privilege of a Frenchman to usher his solemn trifles with the grave visage of philosophy. Their very bagatelles have in them something pleasing, that arrest the judgment, and leaves the reader in suspense whether most to applaud or condemn. This art we may admire, but never imitate. The British writer who affects formality and method, without profound learning, betrays his ignorance and becomes ridiculous. Nor is he more successful in his attempts to be lively without a native fund of humor. But the Frenchman, with no great share of either, is sure of being agreeable in both. Energy, accuracy, and industry would seem to characterize the one; beauty, and elegance of drapery, with a certain happiness of design, are the distinguishing marks of the other. By the former a thought is scrupulously examined in every light; by the latter it is placed with little trouble in the most striking. The one separates, compares, and pursues his subject with pain; the other playfully skims over the surface, but with an eye so piercing as, without removing the veil, seems at one glance to dive into the deeps of science. Here a writer is strained and tortured into all the distortions of the Pythian goddess to utter what he knows; there he talks with a decisive dignity and a graceful eloquence upon subjects of which he is totally ignorant; nay, he almost persuades us that his facility arises from his knowledge.[1] The author before us will, in some measure, illustrate the truth of these remarks.

M. Goguet appears to us rather a writer of genius than of erudition; yet by dint of the former we would imagine him possessed of the latter. He has spread his learning with so light and masterly a hand, that no part of the performance seems wanting, although in the aggregate it is little more than a shadow or phantom of knowledge. His subject requires depth, and his plan proposes it: but alas! in the execution we find only the skeleton, draught and outlines of his design remaining to be filled up by some future artist. In three vol-

[1] We would here be understood to speak of the general characters of writers; which supposes numberless exceptions on both sides.—GOLDSMITH.

umes octavo Mr. President Goguet has comprised a subject which, in the hands of some writers, would have swelled to ten times the number in folio. If it should please God to turn the heart of a certain learned gentleman to so useful an undertaking, we may soon expect to see Dr. Radcliffe's library replenished with much profound learning, and this stupendous monument of pride converted to better purposes than being the object of stupid admiration of every head as empty as its walls that now visits *alma mater*.

Our author has here given a history of the rise and progress of science, which, as he justly observes, may be termed a history of the human mind from its infancy to its maturity, full growth, and perfection. When we first set about reading our historian, when we perused his preface, where he professes to give an accurate view of facts, as first principles; to trace the origin of laws, arts, and sciences in the manner most agreeable to these principles; and lastly, to connect the variety of different objects in so regular a chain as at one glance to show their mutual influence, we doubted not but the wish of our great Lord Verulam was accomplished. But we reckoned without our host, our author's performance falls infinitely short of the big idea of that noble sage: for with vast pomp of method, and an almost disgusting parade of erudition (having quoted near four hundred authors, ancient and modern), he appears to have taken many facts upon slight authority; to have rejected others which are well attested; to have misrepresented some; and, upon the whole, to be injudicious in his choice of facts, and superficial in his reflections. He complains, and with reason, that those who have hitherto pursued this path have failed in the attempt, through want of ability or industry to examine facts with the necessary minuteness. This seems to be the rock on which he likewise has split; and we fear that such as may henceforward work on the materials he has collected will have no less cause of complaint. In short, his prefatory promises are performed with the integrity usual in such introductory pieces, and we need not scruple to apply to him what he says of the diligent Paracelsus: "Tout y est hazardé. Les faits les plus faux, et les contes les plus apocryphes y sont adoptés aveuglément. Cet ouvrage prouve une parfaite négligence, joint à une démangeaison extrême de faire un livre." Indeed, this itch of book-making, this *cacoëthes scribendi*, seems no less the prevailing disorder of England than of France. *Scribimus indocti, doctique.*

M. Goguet, after a short sketch of the state of mankind before the

flood, begins his history with that great era, which he continues to the death of Jacob, making this period the first division of his performance. Here he treats of the establishment of *positive laws* under two classes, the last of which he calls the *civil law*. He gives a short view of the constitution, government, and laws of the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and Greeks, in the earliest ages. He touches upon their agriculture and arts necessary to the support of life; shows their origin and gradual progress, but is sparing in his reflections on the causes of their growth and rise. Then he proceeds to the origin of weaving, dyeing, architecture, metallurgy, etching, embossing, carving, sculpture, and designing in general. Under this head he includes the first use of writing, and its progress to the year 1690 before the birth of our Saviour. Hence he proceeds to the sciences, under which he ranks surgery, anatomy, botany, and pharmacy, which, in our opinion, he ought to have placed under the arts. His next division of science consists of arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, mechanics, and geography. Mechanics he treats of after geometry, because to it they owe their perfection. For the same reason astronomy ought to be placed after geometry and mechanics. It is true that to geometry they both owe their high degree of perfection, but not their birth. The spade, the mattock, and balance were used, and many observations on the heavens made, before geometry came to be applied to discover the powers of the wedge and lever, or the distance and magnitude of the planets. To deep speculation, indeed, they owe their progress; but their discovery seems to be the result of accident, of necessity, and that sort of observation peculiar to the human intellect. Next follows the art of war, upon which M. Goguet has spent more pains in being explicit than upon any of the former topics. Then he comes to the manners and customs of Asiatics and Europeans, without descending to the sub-distinctions of each particular nation; the whole historical part of this period concluding with critical remarks upon it.

Having finished this barren disquisition, he proceeds to the second period, viz., from the death of Jacob to the establishment of monarchy among the Hebrews. This he has treated in the same order and method as the preceding. The third period contains a space of five hundred and sixty years; that is, from the end of the former to the return of the Hebrews from captivity; to which are subjoined some curious extracts from Chinese writers, communicated to our author by the learned M. Hautes Rayes. These contain many valuable particu-

lars concerning the history, manners, government, arts, and sciences of the ancient Chinese, to which M. Goguet has had frequent recourse in his history.

As it would trespass on our plan to dwell minutely on each of the above particulars, we must refer our readers to the author. Upon the whole, we will venture to say that this work, with all its imperfections, has likewise its merit. The arrangement, harmony, and disposition of the several parts are nice and judicious. The style is concise, clear, and not inelegant; and if the reflections are not profound and labored, they are at least pertinent, and naturally rising from the subject. It is in every respect well calculated for such as would be scholars without the trouble of much reading, and think it sufficient—

"To catch the eel of science by the tail."

VII.—WARD ON ORATORY.[1]

"*A System of Oratory, delivered in a Course of Lectures, publicly read at Gresham College.* By JOHN WARD, LL.D., F.R.S." In two vols., 8vo.

IF diction perfectly grammatical, and a method perfectly scientific; if the marks of extensive reading, and an omission of scarce aught that has been formerly advanced on the subject, demand applause, these lectures may assert their claim. Accurate and copious, they contain all that the ancients have delivered on the rhetorician's art, all the rules commentators have coolly deduced from a careful perusal of the raptures of Demosthenes and Cicero. This, perhaps, was all the praise our author sought; and this much certainly is his due. We will not accuse the lecturer of phlegm, since he only professes to be didactic; nor censure his many repetitions, since to an audience, perhaps, they conduce to perspicuity. They who seek to understand rhetoric must be contented with the disgusting dryness of names and definitions: those names and proper definitions are supplied here in abundance. If, regardless of the present age, the author has not thought proper to adapt his rules to the differing modes of eloquence of different centuries, he has, nevertheless, been a faithful commentator upon the ancients, whom he appears to have studied, and whose

[1] Dr. John Ward, Professor of Rhetoric in Gresham College for thirty-eight years. Born in London 1679, died 1758.

languages he seems perfectly to have understood. We would not, therefore, be thought to object to the execution of the present performance, but to the choice of the subject; not to the lecturer's talents, but the inutility of his task.

Upon a former occasion we hinted our opinion that eloquence is more improved by the perusal of the great masters, from whose excellences rules have been afterwards formed, than by an attendance on the lectures of such as pretend to teach the art by rule, more by imitation than by precept. We shall here, then, take the liberty of pursuing the thought; and as an extract from the work before us can (from the nature of the subject) neither excite the reader's curiosity nor awaken his attention, instead of offering anything from the author we shall fill up a page with a few observations of our own. We all would be orators: we live in an age of orators: our very tradesmen are orators. Were it not worth while to ask what oratory is?

Oratory is nothing more than the being able to imprint on others, with rapidity and force, the sentiments of which we are possessed ourselves. Thus sometimes even silence is eloquent, and action persuades when words might fail. We may be thus impressed, without being convinced; and our passions are often excited on the side of the speaker, though reason would resist their impulse. "Whatever," says Boileau, "we clearly conceive, we can clearly express; whatever we conceive with warmth, is expressed in the same manner:" when the emotion is strong, the words rise almost involuntarily, to give our feelings all the force of expression. The speaker who calmly considers the propriety of his diction cools in the interval; the spirit is fled, and, not being moved himself, he ceases to affect his hearers. Should we examine writers of genius on the most applauded parts of their performances, they would readily answer that those parts have been most admired which they wrote with the greatest ease and the warmest enthusiasm. Thus we see eloquence is born with us before the rules of rhetoric, as languages have been formed before the rules of grammar. Nature alone is mistress of the art; and perhaps every person who understands the language in which he speaks, who has great interest in the cause he defends, or is warmly attached to his party, must be an orator. This is the reason that the most barbarous nations speak in a style more affecting and figurative than others; they feel with passions unabated by judgment, and tropes and figures are the natural result of their sensations. These strong and vigorous emotions, therefore, can be nowhere taught, but they

may be extinguished by rule; and this we find actually to have been the case: we find no Grecian orator truly sublime after the precepts of Aristotle, nor Roman after the lectures of Quintilian. Their precepts might have guarded their successors from falling into faults, but at the same time they deterred them from rising into beauty. Cool, dispassionate, and even, they never forfeited their title to good-sense; they incurred no disgust, and they raised no admiration.

But if rules in general of this kind are of such inutility, how much more must they lead us astray, when we cite the precepts given to the orators of one country to direct the pleadings of another! Rules drawn from the ancients to direct a modern barrister would make him thoroughly ridiculous, and yet this custom prevailed in Europe till about a century ago. A lawyer, who even then perceived the absurdity of the custom, hearing his adversary talk of the war of Troy, the beauteous Helen, and the river Scamander, entreated the court to observe that his client was christened, not Scamander, but Simon.

In fact, those men who have taken so much pains to reduce what is properly a *talent* to an *art* have but very little advanced the interests of learning; by their means the mind, attentive to her own operations, mixes judgment with all her enthusiasms; and, like a man who is ever reflecting on the danger of every hazardous enterprise, at last is satisfied with the advantages of safety, unconcerned about the rewards attending success.[1]

VIII.—MURPHY'S "ORPHAN OF CHINA."

"*The Orphan of China: a Tragedy.* By Arthur Murphy, Esq."

When luxury has exhausted every mode of enjoyment, and is palled by an iteration of the same pursuits, it often has recourse even to absurdity for redress, and vainly expects from novelty those satisfactions it has ceased to find in nature. Like the Asiatic tyrant of antiquity, wearied of the old pleasures, it proposes immense rewards, and eagerly seeks amusement in the new. From the prevalence of a taste like this, or rather from this perversion of taste, the refined European has of late had recourse even to China, in order to diversify the amusements of the day. We have seen gardens laid out in the Eastern

[1] This criticism is followed by a kind notice of Goldsmith's "Inquiry."

manner, houses ornamented in front by zigzag lines, and rooms stuck round with Chinese vases and Indian pagods. If such whimsies prevail among those who conduct the pleasures of the times, and consequently lead the fashion, is it to be wondered if even poetry itself should conform, and the public be presented with a piece formed upon Chinese manners?—manners which, though the poet should happen to mistake, he has the consolation left that few readers are able to detect the imposture. Voltaire, than whom no author better adapts his productions to the color of the times, was sensible of this prevalence of fashion in favor of all that came from China, and resolved to indulge its extravagance. He has accordingly embroidered a Chinese plot with all the coloring of French poetry; but his advances to excellence are only in proportion to his deviating from the calm insipidity of his Eastern original. Of all nations that ever felt the influence of the inspiring goddess, perhaps the Chinese are to be placed in the lowest class; their productions are the most phlegmatic that can be imagined. In those pieces of poetry, or novel, translations, some of which we have seen, and which probably may soon be made public,[1] there is not a single attempt to address the imagination, or influence the passions; such, therefore, are very improper models for imitation; and Voltaire, who was perhaps sensible of this, has made very considerable deviations from the original plan.[2] Our English poet has deviated still further, and in proportion as the plot has become more European it has become perfect. By omitting many of the circum-

[1] A specimen of this kind will probably appear next season at Mr. Dodsley's, as we are informed.—GOLDSMITH. In 1761 Dr. Percy published a translation of "Han Kiou Choaan, or the Pleasing History," a Chinese novel, containing a faithful picture of the domestic manners, habits, and characters of that extraordinary people.

[2] "The first specimen of a Chinese play was translated into French by the Jesuit Prémaire. Voltaire made his translation of the 'Orphan of Chaou' the groundwork of one of his best tragedies, 'L'Orphelin de la Chine;' it is founded on an event which occurred about a hundred years before the birth of Confucius. A military leader, having usurped the lands of the house of Chaou, is determined on exterminating the whole race. A faithful dependent of the family saves the life of the orphan and male heir, by concealing him, and passing off his own child in his stead. The orphan is brought up in ignorance of his real condition, until he reaches man's estate, when the whole subject being revealed to him by his tutor and guardian, he revenges the fate of his family on the usurper, and recovers his rights. In this plot Dr. Hurd remarked a near resemblance, in many points, to the 'Electra' of Sophocles, where the young Orestes is reared by his *pedagogus*, or tutor, until he is old enough to enact summary justice on the murderers of his father, Agamemnon."—DAVIS, *Chinese*, vol. ii. p. 191.

stances of the original story, and adding several of his own, Mr. Murphy has given us a play, if not truly Chinese, at least entirely poetical. Perhaps it was the intention of this ingenious writer to show the strength of his imagination in embellishing a barren plot, and, like the artist we have sometimes heard of, who was famous for dressing a pair of shoes into a fricassee, chose rather to have us admire his manner than his materials.

The first error in the plot of this piece is that the pathos begins without a proper preparation of incident. The most poignant anguish begins in the second act, where Mandane, the only woman of the play, feels all the distress of passion, conflicting between a subject's duty and a mother's tenderness. When the poet thus attempts to move us before his time, the most he can do is to raise an equally moderate degree of pity through the whole, which all his art cannot raise into that fine agony of distress so common among the great masters of his art. All enthusiasms are of short continuance; nor is it in the power of genius to keep our sorrows alive through five acts, unless it diversifies the object, or in every act excites some new and unforeseen distress; but neither of these the Chinese plot in view admits of.

Shakspeare, Otway, and Rowe seemed to have been perfect economists of their distress (if we may use the expression); they were so sensible of a necessary gradation in this respect, that their characters frequently make their first appearance in circumstances of joy and triumph. They well knew that we are apt to pity the sufferings of mankind, in proportion as they have fallen from former happiness. Othello, therefore, meets the mistress he must soon kill in all the ecstasy of a happy lover. Acasto surveys the felicity of his family with the most unreserved degree of rapture; and the father of the Fair Penitent, who so soon is to be wretched indeed, begins in a strain of exultation that forces us almost to envy his felicity.

We have been led into these reflections from observing the effect the ingenious performance before us had upon the audience the first night of its representation. The whole house seemed pleased, highly and justly pleased; but it was not with the *luxury of woe*[1] they seemed affected: the nervous sentiment, the glowing imagery, the well-conducted scenery, seemed the sources of their pleasure; their judgment could not avoid approving the conduct of the drama, yet few of the

[1] Goldsmith was fond of this expression and of the word *woe*, on which he has six rhymes in his short poem of "The Deserted Village."

situations were capable of getting within the soul, or exciting a single tear; in short, it was quickly seen that all the faults of the performance proceeded from vicious imitation, and all its beauties were the poet's own.

And now we are mentioning faults (faults which a single quotation from the play will happily expunge from the reader's memory), the author has, perhaps, too frequently mentioned the word *virtue*. This expression should, in the mouth of a philosopher, be husbanded, and only used on great occasions; if repeated too often, it loses its cabalistic power, and at last degenerates into contempt. This was actually the case at Athens, so that their Πολυθρυλλετη ἀρετή, as it was called, became contemptible even among the most stupid of their neighboring nations; and towards the latter end of their government they grew ashamed of it themselves. But, to do the writer ample justice, we will lay one scene against all his defects, and we are convinced that this alone will turn the balance in his favor. Works of genius are not to be judged from the faults to be met with in them, but by the beauties in which they abound.

Zamti, the Chinese high-priest, is informed that his own son is going to be offered up as the orphan-heir of China; after a short conflict, his duty gains a complete victory over paternal affection: he is willing his son should die, in order to secure his king; but the difficulty remains to persuade his wife, Mandane, to forego a mother's fondness, and conspire also in the deceit:

Scene.—MANDANE, ZAMTI.[1]

Mandane. And can it then be true?
Is human nature exil'd from thy breast?
Art thou, indeed, so barbarous!
Zamti. Lov'd Mandane,
Fix not your scorpions here—a bearded shaft
Already drinks my spirits up.
Mandane. I've seen
The trusty Morat—I have heard it all.
He would have shunn'd my steps; but what can 'scape
The eye of tenderness like mine?
Zamti. By heav'n!
I cannot speak to thee.
Mandane. Think'st thou those tears,
Those false, those cruel tears, will choke the voice
Of a fond mother's love, now stung to madness?

[1] Garrick played Zamti; Mandane was played by Mrs. Yates.

Oh! I will rend the air with lamentations;
Root up this hair, and beat this throbbing breast;
Turn all connubial joys to bitterness,
To fell despair, to anguish, and remorse,
Unless my son—
Zamti. Thou ever faithful woman,
Oh! leave me to my woes.
Mandane. Give me my child,
Thou worse than Tartar, give me back my son;
Oh! give him to a mother's eager arms,
And let me strain him to my heart.
Zamti. Heaven knows
How dear my boy is here. But our first duty
Now claims attention—to our country's love,
All other fondnesses must yield:
I was a subject ere I was a father.
Mandane. You were a savage, bred in Scythian wilds,
And humanizing pity never reach'd
Your heart. Was it for this—oh! thou unkind one,
Was it for this—oh! thou inhuman father,
You woo'd me to your nuptial bed? So long
Have I then clasp'd thee in these circling arms,
And made this breast your pillow? Cruel, say,
Are these your vows? Are these your fond endearments?
Nay, look upon me. If this wasted form,
These faded eyes, have turn'd your heart against me,
With grief for you I wither'd in my bloom.
Zamti. Why wilt thou pierce my heart?
Mandane. Alas! my son,
Have I then bore thee in these matron arms,
To see thee bleed? Thus dost thou then return?
This could your mother hope, when first she sent
Her infant exile to a distant clime?
Ah! could I think thy early love of fame
Would urge thee to this peril? Thus to fall
By a stern father's will. By thee to die!
From thee, inhuman, to receive his doom!
Murder'd by thee! Yet hear me, Zamti, hear me—
Thus on my knees—I threaten now no more—
'Tis Nature's voice that pleads; Nature alarm'd,
Quick, trembling, wild, touch'd to her inmost feeling,
When force would tear her tender young ones from her.
Zamti. Nay, seek not with enfeebling fond ideas
To swell the flood of grief—it is in vain—
He must submit to fate.
Mandane. Barbarian! no—(*She rises hastily*)—
He shall not die—rather—I pri'thee, Zamti,

Urge not a grief-distracted woman. Tremble
At the wild fury of a woman's love.

Zamti. I tremble rather at a breach of oaths.
But thou break thine. Bathe your perfidious hands
In this life-blood. Betray the righteous cause
Of all our sacred kings.

Mandane. Our kings!—our kings!
What are the sceptred rulers of the world?—
Form'd of one common clay, are they not all
Doom'd with each subject, with the meanest slave,
To drink the cup of human woe?—alike
All levell'd by affliction? Sacred kings!
'Tis human policy sets up their claim.
Mine is a mother's cause—mine is the cause
Of husband, wife, and child;—those tenderest ties!
Superior to your right divine of kings!

Zamti. Then go, Mandane, thou once faithful woman,
Dear to this heart in vain;—go, and forget
Those virtuous lessons which I oft have taught thee,
In fond credulity, while on each word
You hung enamor'd. Go to Timurkan,
Reveal the awful truth. Be thou spectatress
Of murder'd majesty. Embrace your son,
And let him lead in shame and servitude
A life ignobly bought. Then let those eyes,
Those faded eyes, which grief for me hath dimm'd,
With guilty joy reanimate their lustre,
To brighten slavery, and beam their fires
On the fell Scythian murderer.

Mandane. And is it thus,
Thus is Mandane known? My soul disdains
The vile imputed guilt. No—never—never—
Still am I true to fame. Come, lead me hence,
Where I may lay down life to save Zaphimri;
But save my Hamet too. Then, then you'll find
A heart beats here, as warm and great as thine.

Zamti. Then make with me one strong, one glorious effort,
And rank with those who, from the first of time,
In fame's eternal archives stand rever'd,
For conquering all the dearest ties of nature,
To serve the general weal.

Mandane. That savage virtue
Loses with me its horrid charms. I've sworn
To save my king. But should a mother turn
A dire assassin—oh! I cannot bear
The piercing thought. Distraction—quick distraction
Will seize my brain.—See there—my child—my child—

By guards surrounded, a devoted victim,—
Barbarians, hold! Ah! see, he dies!—he dies!
[*She faints into Zamti's arms.*
Zamti. Where is Arsace? Fond maternal love
Shakes her weak frame. (*Enter Arsace.*). Quickly, Arsace, help
This ever tender creature. Wand'ring life
Rekindles in her cheek. Soft, lead her off
To where the fanning breeze in yonder bow'r
May woo her spirits back. Propitious Heav'n!
Pity the woundings of a father's heart;
Pity my strugglings with this best of women;
Support our virtue—kindle in our souls
A ray of your divine enthusiasm;
Such as inflames the patriot's breast, and lifts
Th' imprison'd mind to that sublime of virtue,
That even on the rack it feels the good,
Which in a single hour it works to millions,
And leaves the legacy to after-times.
[*Exit, leading off Mandane.*

Even in so short a specimen the reader sees a strength of thought, a propriety of diction, and a perfect acquaintance with the stage. The whole is thus in action, filled with incident, and embellished with a justness of sentiment, not to be found even in Mr. Voltaire. The French poet, for instance, seems to speak without detestation of self-murder, and instances the neighboring Japanese,[1] who find in it a refuge from all their sorrows: our poet more justly brands it as an usurpation of

Zamti. The dread prerogative
Of life and death, and measure out the thread
Of our own beings! 'Tis the coward's act,
Who dares not to encounter pain and peril—
Be that the practice of the gloomy North.
Mandane. Must we then wait a haughty tyrant's rod,
The vassals of his will?—no—let us rather
Nobly break through the barriers of this life,

[1] "L'homme était-il donc né pour tant de dépendance,
De nos voisins altiers imitons la constance;
De la nature humaine ils soutiennent les droits,
Vivent libres chez eux, et meurent à leur choix.
Un affront leur suffit pour sortir de la vie,
Et plus que le néant ils craignent l'infamie,
Le hardi Japonais n'attend pas qu'au cercueil,
Un despote insolent le plonge d'un coup-d'œil."
L'Orphelin de la Chine, acte v. sc. 5.

And join the beings of some other world,
Who'll throng around our greatly daring souls,
And view the deed with wonder and applause.
Zamti. Distress too exquisite!—Ye holy pow'rs,
If aught below can supersede your law,
And plead for wretches who dare, self-impell'd,
Rush to your awful presence;—oh! it is not
When the distemper'd passions rage; when pride
Is stung to madness; when ambition falls
From his high scaffolding;—oh!—no—if aught
Can justify the blow, it is when virtue
Has nothing left to do;—when liberty
No more can breathe at large;—'tis with the groans
Of our dear country when we dare to die.
Mandane. Then here at once direct the friendly steel.
Zamti. One last adieu!—now!—ah! does this become
Thy husband's love! thus with uplifted blade
Can I approach that bosom-bliss, where oft
With other looks than those—oh! my Mandane—
I've hush'd my cares within thy shelt'ring arms?
Mandane. Alas! the loves that hover'd o'er our pillows
Have spread their pinions, never to return,
And the pale fates surround us—
Then lay me down in honorable rest;
Come, as thou art, all hero, to my arms,
And free a virtuous wife.
Zamti. It must be so—
Now, then, prepare thee—my arm flags and droops,
Conscious of thee in ev'ry trembling nerve.
[*Dashes down the dagger.*

OF EWING CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ALLAHABAD

This is finely conceived, and exquisitely executed. Subjoined to the play we find a letter, addressed from the author to Voltaire, which we think might have been better suppressed; for though it is written with fire and spirit, and contains many judicious observations, it may subject Mr. Murphy to the censure of having made but an indifferent return to a man whose sentiments and plan he has, in a great measure, thought proper to adopt. It may be indeed considered as a just retribution on a Frenchman, who had served Shakspeare in the same manner; that is, adopted all his beauties, and then reviled him for his faults. Voltaire is entitled to particular regard from our countrymen, notwithstanding the petulance with which he has treated them on some occasions; for he was certainly the first who opened the eyes of Europe to the excellences of English poetry.

END OF VOL. VII.